LET YOUTH BUT KNOW

BY KAPPA

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LET YOUTH BUT KNOW

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A PLEA FOR REASON IN EDUCATION

BY

KAPPA

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The following papers originally appeared in the Westminster Gazette *under the title,* IF YOUTH BUT KNEW. *That phrase having already been applied to a series of stories by Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle, the title has been slightly altered to avoid confusion.*

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TO

THE UNDERGRADUATE

(WITH APOLOGIES)

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INTRODUCTION

THE circumstances in which the following little treatise took its rise are truthfully set forth in the first chapter. When I determined to put on paper the thoughts on education which had for years been germinating in my mind, I suddenly realised that I had read little or nothing on the subject. The question thus confronted me: Shall I read, and then write? or write, and then read? I chose the latter alternative. Regarding my position as that of a witness giving evidence in the trial of the current system of public-school education (which alone I have in view), I felt that the value of my evidence must lie in its sincerity as a record of personal experience and thought, and could only be impaired by collusion with other witnesses.

Accordingly I wrote, without any study of books, the series of papers originally published

in the *Westminster Gazette*, and here collected. I have reprinted them with only the most trifling alterations. They represented a continuous process both of thought and feeling; so that any recasting, however advantageous from other points of view, would, it seemed to me, break up a certain unity of movement which I hope may be found in them. I have, however, added some postscripts and footnotes, either dealing with criticisms, or embodying considerations originally omitted for lack of space.

Moreover, I have now read some of the authorities on education, and realised that to have done so earlier would have been to nip this book in the bud. I should never have dared to say over again so much that better men had said before me. Yet—whatever the reader may feel on the point—I cannot now regret having re-thought and re-worded so many of the thoughts of my predecessors. The very fact that such excellent things had been said by such excellent men, without, apparently, producing one jot or tittle of result, makes me doubly confident of the necessity that they should be said again and yet again, and even dinned into the ears of parents,

teachers, and legislators. It is depressing to reflect that Herbert Spencer's treatise on *Education* is forty-four years old, and that the public-school curriculum remains what it is. In other quarters, no doubt, Spencer's work has done good service; but the public schools have resolutely ignored it. Spencer, it is true, diminished the force of his impact by introducing a good deal of merely doctrinary matter. For instance, his exposition of the dependence of art upon science is evidently a piece of special pleading, based upon a purely speculative conception of what art really means. Conservatism doubtless seized upon what was weak in his argument, to excuse its disregard of what was strong, cogent, irrefragable. It would be ridiculous to hope that in the following pages I have not offered it plenty of pretexts for a like evasion. Yet, inasmuch as my book is shorter than Spencer's and my outlook narrower, I have had less opportunity of falling into error; while the extracts from his work which I have been permitted to make in my Appendix will, I trust, reinforce my inferior power of exposition, and drive home some of those fundamental points on which we are in agreement.

Among other books in which I recognise

many of my own ideas, I may mention the works of Sir Joshua Fitch, late H.M. Inspector of Training Colleges, and especially his lectures on *Educational Aims and Methods* (Cambridge University Press, 1900). In Sir Joshua Fitch sound and catholic culture was united to wide technical experience. It has given me the greatest encouragement to find him, at several points, almost verbally anticipating my views, and at no point in marked divergence from them.

From *The Upton Letters*, by "T. B." (Smith, Elder, & Co., 1905), I have derived not only encouragement but the keenest pleasure. I am tempted to apply to this work a phrase strangely misapplied to a production of a very different order, and call it "a golden book of spirit and of sense." The style is as delightful as the thought is humane, sensitive, inspiring. Who the author is I do not know; but I say with conviction: Happy the schoolboys who come under the influence of "T. B."!

Mr. William James's excellent *Talks to Teachers on Psychology* (Longmans, 1903) have helped to clear my mind on several points. Two little books by Mrs. M. E. Boole I have read with extraordinary interest.

They are *The Preparation of the Child for Science* and *Lectures on the Logic of Arithmetic*, both published by the Clarendon Press. My rank incompetence in mathematics disables me from forming a definite judgment as to the validity of Mrs. Boole's more technical doctrines; but her whole mental attitude seems to me admirably sane and helpful. I have also found much suggestion in *Home Education*, by Charlotte M. Mason (Kegan Paul & Co., 1905), the opening sections of which form a most valuable commentary on my third chapter.

Two stories of school life, published within the past year, have confirmed the impressions I had elsewhere gathered as to the moral and intellectual tone of the modern public school. Though by no means of equal value, both books are evidently written from intimate and recent knowledge of the matter in hand. *Hugh Rendal*, by Mr. Lionel Portman (Alston Rivers), describes a school "in the midlands, among the moors." It is an able book, full of sound common sense and excellent feeling. *The Hill*, by Mr. Horace Annesley Vachell (John Murray), deals, as its title sufficiently indicates, with Harrow. There runs through it a rather sickly strain of sentiment, and one

gathers that the typical Harrovian is apt to be obtrusively conscious of belonging to the governing classes—a characteristic which might be more briefly, if less politely, expressed. At the same time there can be no doubt that Mr. Vachell writes with his eye on the object, and that his picture is in the main a true one. Both he and Mr. Portman believe ardently in the public-school system, and, while frankly admitting certain blemishes upon it, are to be accepted as witnesses for the defence.

Since the body of this book went to press, there has appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* a paper by Mr. H. G. Wells, which I will venture to describe rather as a most valuable supplement to my articles than as a criticism of them. Mr. Wells writes :—

"While one agrees with 'Kappa' and shares "his alarm, one must confess the remedies he "considers indicated do not seem quite so "satisfactory as his diagnosis of the disease. "He attacks the curriculum, and tells us we "must reduce or remove instruction and exer-"cise in the dead languages, introduce a "broader handling of history, a more inspiring

"arrangement of scientific courses, and so forth. "I wish, indeed, it were possible to believe that "substituting biology for Greek, or history with "models and photographs and diagrams for "Latin prose composition, would make any "considerable difference in this matter. For "so might one discuss this question and still "give no offence to a most amiable and influ-"ential class of men. But the roots of the "evil, the ultimate cause of that typical young "man's deadness, lie not at all in that direc-"tion. To indicate the direction in which it "does lie is quite unavoidably to give offence "to an indiscriminatingly sensitive class. Yet "there is need to speak plainly. This deaden-"ing of soul comes not from the omission or "inclusion of this specific subject or that; it "is the effect of the general scholastic atmo-"sphere. It is an atmosphere that admits of "no inspiration at all. It is an atmosphere "from which living stimulating influences have "been carefully excluded, from which stimu-"lating and vigorous personalities are now being "carefully eliminated, and in which dull prosaic "men prevail invincibly. The explanation of "the inert commonness of 'Kappa's' schoolboy "lies not in his having learnt this or not learnt

"that, but in the fact that from seven to twenty
"he has been in the intellectual shadow of a
"number of good-hearted, sedulously respect-
"able, conscientiously manly, conforming, well-
"behaved men, who never, to the knowledge
"of their pupils and the public at any rate,
"think strange thoughts, do imaginative or
"romantic things, pay tribute to beauty, laugh
"carelessly, or countenance any irregularity in
"the world. All erratic and enterprising ten-
"dencies in him have been checked by them
"and brought at last to nothing; and so he
"emerges a mere residuum of decent minor
"tendencies. The dulness of the scholastic
"atmosphere, the grey intolerant mediocrity
"that is the natural or assumed quality of
"every upper-class schoolmaster, is the true
"cause of the spiritual etiolation of 'Kappa's'
"young friend."

A correspondent, intimate with the modern public school, who addressed me privately before Mr. Wells's article appeared, took up very much the same position, and maintained that the race of Headmasters was steadily deteriorating. Upon this point I offer no opinion, having no materials for forming a judgment. But I entirely agree with my

correspondent in holding the clerical Head-master a manifest anachronism, a survival from the middle ages. His abolition would be, as Carlyle says, "significant of much."

To return, however, to Mr. Wells. Making large reservation in favour of individuals, and allowing for some characteristic vivacities of expression, I in the main agree with him. But he seems curiously oblivious of the surely evident fact that the men are the products — not to say the victims — of the system. It is perfectly true that, given a teacher of genius, or even of strong and original intelligence, almost any subject may be made inspiring, awakening, educative in the highest sense. But geniuses are rare under the best of circumstances; and if we want to have an adequate supply of men of strong and original intelligence, we must take reasonable measures to produce them. The burden of my argument is precisely this, that the present course of studies at preparatory and public schools does not tend to supply the teaching profession, or any other, with men of strong and original intelligence. If it produces such men at all, it is by chance, and in its own despite. Of course it is men we want; of

that there is no doubt; but it is equally certain that we cannot find men by simply crying out for them.

The whole trouble is that public-school education moves in a vicious circle: the system begets the masters and the masters maintain the system. Now, it is often hard to decide at what point one may best break through a vicious circle; but here, as it seems to me, the system is quite evidently the point to be attacked. I venture to think that Mr. Wells's apparent indifference as to the nature and the proportional adjustment of the subjects composing a school course, is largely assumed for the sake of enforcing his immediate point. Let me put the case to him in this way: Suppose that we could miraculously transform the acquirements of all our public-school masters, without altering their character, their intelligence, or their outlook upon life; suppose that, while the philistines among them remained as philistine as ever, we could to-morrow endow them all with a power to teach the subjects indicated in my general scheme, exactly equivalent to their power of teaching the subjects included in the present curriculum; suppose this miracle effected,

would Mr. Wells deny that it would place us far on the way towards a beneficent reform? The hypothesis is a little complicated, but if Mr. Wells will think it out, I am sure he will see my point. Even assuming that, in the course of imparting "the new learning," the masters themselves gained nothing, the pupils would at any rate acquire some vital and relevant, or, as Spencer would say, some organizable, knowledge, and would, in their turn, furnish forth a better body of masters to teach the next generation. But in all probability the masters would themselves gain scarcely less than the pupils. In occupying their minds with real instead of unreal things, with necessary relations in place of conventions, they would educate themselves as well as their scholars, and gradually come to take wider views of life, its problems, and its possibilities. This is, indeed, the very ideal of education: that the teacher should not be a mere conduit-pipe for conveying knowledge to his pupils, but that he and they should be mutually helpful fellow-students in the school of life.

My illustration postulates, of course, a wild impossibility. But which is more inconceivable: the schoolmasters of to-day administering a

course of studies that would satisfy me, or a body of masters that would satisfy Mr. Wells administering the studies of to-day? I submit that the latter state of things would presuppose by far the greater miracle of the two. It is utterly out of the power of the clerico-classical curriculum to produce any considerable number of what Mr. Wells calls "authentic men, taking a line of their own, and capable of intellectual passion." But it ought to be quite within our power to bring about gradually such a change in the subjects and methods of study as shall, still more gradually, produce a race of teachers approximating, as closely as human frailty will permit, to Mr. Wells's high ideal.

As to Mr. Wells's implied opinion that the nature of the thing taught is of comparatively trifling moment, I am tempted to answer him out of his own mouth. In the Appendix to his *Modern Utopia*, he gives a brief sketch of his own education. He says:—

"I had come into pretty intimate contact "with the harder realities of life . . . before "I was fifteen. About that age, following the "indication of certain theological and specula-"tive curiosities, I began to learn something "of what I will call deliberately and justly,

"Elementary Science . . . and then, through
"accidents and ambitions that do not matter
"in the least to us now, I came to three years
"of illuminating and good scientific work. The
"central fact of those three years was Huxley's
"course in Comparative Anatomy at the school
"in Exhibition Road. About that as a nucleus
"I arranged a spacious digest of facts. At the
"end of that time I had acquired what I still
"think to be a fairly clear and complete and
"ordered view of the ostensibly real universe.
"Let me try to give you the chief things I
"had. I had man definitely placed in the
"great scheme of space and time. I knew
"him incurably for what he was, finite and not
"final, a being of compromises and adaptations."
There follows an outline of a comprehensive course of biological study, ending thus:—
"I had checked the whole theory of develop-
"ment again in a year's course of palæontology,
"and I had taken the dimensions of the whole
"process, by the scale of the stars, in a course
"of astronomical physics."

Mr. Wells is evidently satisfied that the three years he describes were well spent. And who shall doubt it? No one, certainly, who realises what we owe to Mr. Wells, both as

a thinker and as an imaginative artist. But will he tell us that these years would have been equally well spent in construing and composing Greek and Latin verse and prose, even under the most inspiring of masters? Or will he have us believe that the good effect of the three years was mainly due to the teachers, and only incidentally to the things taught? True, he came in contact with one teacher of genius —Huxley. But for the rest he does not indicate, nor is there any reason to suppose, that his teachers, considered merely as men, were greatly superior to the average public-school master. Probably, if the truth were known, some of them were dry and uninspiring enough; for science cannot create the teaching faculty in a man who has it not. But the vitality, the reality of their subjects doubtless helped to bring out whatever power of inspiration they originally possessed; and even those who were dull in themselves could not render their subjects entirely dull to a youth whose whole course of study was making the universe alive to him. Where all departments of inquiry are mutually complementary, the inspiration derived from one teacher will communicate itself to the whole course; wherefore (if for no other

reason) it should be one of the chief aims of a master-educator to make all the subjects which, at a given time, engage a pupil's attention, manifestly fit into, or branch out from, each other. All this, I cannot but think, Mr. Wells will admit; and, if so, I do not see how he is to avoid the admission that in his *Westminster* article he laid somewhat too exclusive stress on the influence of the teacher, as distinct from that of the subject taught.

What remains to be said may perhaps best take the form of my own criticism upon the following pages. An author is naturally an indulgent critic of his own work, but he is not necessarily blind to all its limitations and defects.

In the first place, then, the lack of practical experience in teaching is evident throughout, and along with it the pure theorist's tendency to ignore or minimise the element of friction The reader may quite reasonably gather from some of my chapters that I hold education to be an altogether simpler problem than it really is. It may seem as though I believed that a mere change of system would automatically beget a race of brilliantly intelligent and

perfectly virtuous schoolboys and undergraduates. As a matter of fact, I am no such visionary; but, in pleading for an amelioration of method, one naturally insists on its ideal consequences, and cannot always be pausing to allow for the necessity of slowly perfecting instruments and laboriously clearing away obstacles—in a word, for the tardy movement of sublunary things. If it be admitted that the changes which I urge would set up a tendency in the right direction, that is quite sufficient for my purpose, and I can suffer with a good grace all reasonable deductions from my seemingly over-sanguine forecast of results.

Again, it has surprised me to find that none of my critics has hitherto raised a note of alarm as to the solemn young prigs, posers, and sentimentalists whom it may seem to be my ambition to substitute for the healthy, harum-scarum boy-barbarians of to-day. The danger is quite real, and I am not at all insensible to it. Tactless teaching on the lines I suggest might overreach itself in one or other of three ways: it might beget a shallow self-satisfaction, a purblind and priggish positivism; it might bewilder and crush the youthful mind with a sense of the

overwhelming multitude and majesty of phenomena; or it might, by a mechanical and over-insistent dwelling on the miracle of existence, dull that very sense of wonder which it designed to stimulate, and produce a condition of mere hebetude and apathy. All these evils, and especially the last, would have to be carefully guarded against. As Mrs. Boole very wisely points out, "an incessant strain on the imagination and on the perception of the sublime is unhealthy and deadening." I freely admit that a premature initiation into natural theology is no less to be deprecated than the premature inculcation of dogmatic theology. No machine-made system of teaching can ever be right. The best of methods must be modulated by human insight, sympathy, and tact. But I conceive that the practice of a rational method is rather more likely than the practice of an irrational method to beget and foster a tactful race of teachers.

One evident flaw in my argument is the absence of all reference to the examination system and its influence on education. I avoided the question, to speak frankly, because I found it impossible to arrive at a definite opinion regarding it. I am not even clear on

the preliminary question: how far emulation ought to be utilised as a legitimate stimulus to endeavour. Where two or three are gathered together, it would seem very difficult to exclude this motive; wherefore I am disposed to think that the reasonable course is to admit it, while taking every precaution against its becoming an overmastering and fiercely egoistic passion. If the advantage to the winner of an intellectual race is questionable, the discipline to his losing rivals is surely not without its value. I see no reason why examinations should not be devised which should test progress at every stage of the course of training I have sketched, without overspurring emulation or encouraging "cram." Much more difficult is the question of competitive examinations for public appointments and the like. It is hard to see how they could be abolished without reopening the door to jobbery and corruption; nor is it clear how they can be so ordered as wholly to exclude mechanical mark-hunting. One may perhaps venture the suggestion that, at the end of a course of rational education, a short period of cramming might do no great harm. After all, the power to master a subject quickly and (for the moment) thoroughly, in order to meet a

temporary occasion, is one of the aptitudes most frequently demanded in many branches of the public service; so that the examinations which test it are not wholly beside the mark. Another very important question, but quite outside the scope of this book, is that of the sterilising pressure of the examination system on advanced undergraduate work in the universities. Taking it all in all, there can be no doubt that the constant intentness on mark-getting fostered by our scholarship and tripos system contradicts the whole spirit of a liberal education as I conceive it. At the same time, I am pretty confident that the evils of the examination system are not the cause (as some maintain), but rather the consequence, of the unreason of our whole scheme of education, and that, in reforming the matter and manner of our teaching, we should almost inevitably reform our method of testing results.

It is evident that my ideal of education demands a larger and (on the average) a more highly-trained staff of teachers than is at present considered requisite for a well-equipped school. This would mean, of course, that education would be more expensive. There would, after a time, be no lack of such

teachers; for an improved system, as I have argued above, would beget in large numbers the men fitted to administer it. Salaries, then, need not rise to any inordinate level. The increase of expenditure would be due mainly to the reduction of the number of boys assigned to each master. The author of *Hugh Rendal* very justly observes:—"A system which ex-"pects one human being to control, hold the "attention of, and teach thoroughly twenty-five "or thirty healthy, spirited, Philistine English "boys, fourteen to eighteen years old, for a "continuous period of ninety minutes several "times a day, expects more than it is likely to "get. If you want an idle boy properly taught "and disciplined, you must take him elsewhere "than to a public school, and pay more." If any reform worth the name is ever to be effected, we must be prepared to pay more *at* a public school, and secure closer individual attention, not, perhaps, for the two or three boys at the top of a form, but for those whom the present system is content to leave laggards and dunces. On some parents, no doubt, the necessity for a higher scale of fees would fall hardly—how hardly, it is as yet impossible to estimate. If the difficulty proved serious, it

might be met—in part, at any rate—by additional endowments. But there are certainly thousands of parents in England to-day who could very well afford to spend more than they do on their children's education. This form of national thrift (for such it is) might well be encouraged, by permitting the deduction from taxable income of sums paid for actual tuition, as distinct, of course, from charges (now often exorbitant) for residence, board, &c. A man is at present entitled to deduct from his income-tax return the amount of his life-insurance premium. My proposal would merely imply an extension of the same principle.

If I have made any addition at all to the stock of ideas upon education, it is to be found, I think, in the co-ordination of History with Science, and the subordination of language to the very much widened concept of History. This is more, perhaps, than a mere question of phraseology: it is, in my view, a step towards the attainment of a just sense of proportion. The classification seems to me theoretically sound, and not, as it may at first appear, a co-ordination of disparates. Is not science the history of nature, and history the science of man? The orb of knowledge is

marked off into two hemispheres, and language, whether dead or living, is seen to be a segment of a hemisphere, not nine-tenths of the whole sphere. True, the boundary-line is no more substantial than a meridian of longitude. There are subjects—especially the manifold and all-embracing subject of psychology—which, like the great oceans, flow over into both hemispheres. Yet none the less may the imaginary meridian assist our measurements and clarify our mental vision.

Wherever I have ventured upon definite recommendations of detail, I feel the probability of error to be very great. The more one thinks and reads upon education, the more one realises the wisdom of this passage from Sir Joshua Fitch :—"The sum of all I have "sought to enforce on this point is that educa-"tion is a progressive science, at present in a "very early stage of development. Hence it "is the duty of all the practitioners of that "science to be well aware of its incomplete-"ness, and to do something to enlarge its "boundaries and enrich it with new discoveries. "Every school is a laboratory in which new "experiments may be tried and new truths "may be brought to light. And every teacher

"who invents a new method or finds a new "channel of access to the intelligence, the con-"science and the sympathy of his scholars will "do a service not only to his professional "brethren and successors, but to the whole "community." My recommendations of detail, then, are to be regarded simply as the tentative suggestions of an untried amateur, excusable only inasmuch as the true principles of the science are as yet so far from being established. Here, as at so many other points, I am in cordial agreement with the writer of *The Upton Letters*, who says:—"What I want is experi-"ment of every kind; but my cautious friends "say that one would only get something a "great deal worse. That I deny. I maintain "that it is impossible to have anything worse, "and that the majority of the boys we turn out "are intellectually in so negative a condition "that any change would be an improvement."

Finally, one cannot but ask what are the chances that "any change" will be effected by the widespread revolt of which this book is only a minor symptom? Are the forces of conservatism inexpugnably entrenched? Is the clerico-classical phalanx immovable? Are Governing Bodies, Headmasters' Conferences

Senates and Congregations hopelessly enslaved by tradition and sunk in inertia? On this point my own views and hopes are pretty accurately expressed in an editorial which appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* simultaneously with the last of the following chapters. From it I quote this significant passage :—" Correspondents have written to "us to say, while these articles have been "appearing, that it is all true and all hope-"less. Custom, they say, is so hard-frozen "in English public schools, criticism is so much "resented and self-criticism so much out of "fashion, that no reforms will come from "within and none are possible from without, "since all Governments are largely composed "of men who admire the system and have "been brought up on it. For our part, we "are not quite so certain that, if the public "schools were incapable of reforming them-"selves, they might not one day find them-"selves the subject of a public Commission "which would handle them even more "drastically than another Commission handled "the Universities in a previous genera-"tion."

The Editor—to whose unwearying courtesy

and encouragement I own myself deeply indebted—then goes on to say that he does not take quite so gloomy a view of the situation as some of his correspondents. He points to signs of unrest in the public schools themselves, and expresses his belief that among the younger men now at work as teachers, not a few are keenly alive to the shortcomings of the system and exceedingly anxious to find a remedy. This belief I share; but I have little faith in the power of individuals already within the vicious circle to effect any adequate reform. It must be subjected to an organised attack from without, and perhaps the readiest course would be to agitate for a Commission such as the Editor of the *Westminster* forecasts. Endowed public schools are not the private property of any caste or "set," but public trusts, amenable to public control. By one means or another, at all events, reform must be initiated, and that promptly, if a great national danger is to be avoided. Not one danger, indeed, but many; and among them, as the Editor of the *Westminster* points out, a danger to that very "culture" which the clerico-classicists believe themselves to be championing.

" It is no uncommon spectacle [he writes] in
" a public school to find the classical staff dis-
" couraging the modern side, as though it were
" the natural enemy of a good education, with-
" out, however, taking any steps to make good
" the obvious deficiencies of a classical educa-
" tion. So we have an antiquated classical side
" waging war upon a bad modern side, while
" the parent, meanwhile, calls loudly for what
" he vaguely describes as 'a practical educa-
" tion,' and the boy all the time is more and
" more given over to the cult of athletics.
" If this goes on, there will presently come a
" reaction in which the higher education will
" pass over bag and baggage into the hands
" of utilitarians, who at least know what they
" mean when they demand practical and
" technical teaching, and who, as things are,
" can point to the disastrous breakdown of
" the opposite ideal. . . . The word 'culture'
" seems somehow inappropriate to the English
" public school, and we can imagine the gesture
" of contempt with which it would be dis-
" missed by the average healthy schoolboy.
" Yet culture in the real sense of the word—
" not the dilettantism in art and minor verse
" which the word has come to denote, but the

"awakening of the mind to the great interests "of the world—is precisely the object of "education for those who are of the public-"school age. And what we need is a full "recognition that a great part of it is missed "in what is called a classical as well as "what is called a modern education, and a "combined effort by the exponents of both to "set right what is amiss. If instead we find "schoolmasters still determined to assert that "the whole cause depends on a modicum of "compulsory Greek, then the inevitable defeat "of the classicists will bring the defeat of "culture. The time has come when the "literary teacher must take counsel with "the historical teacher and the scientific "teacher to see if between them they "cannot devise a form of education which "does justice to all these studies, and which "will enable the average lad to leave "school with a reasonable equipment of "practical knowledge, with a mind awakened "to the interest and mystery of things, and "free from that absorption in the trivial which "our contributor has noted as one of the "worst signs of modern youth."

One last word. Though this book is, of course, primarily addressed to parents and guardians, pastors and masters, I cannot but hope to find some readers among the rising generation as well. Indeed, I shall be compelled to think that there is something greatly amiss with either the matter or the manner of the following chapters, should they prove to have no interest for intelligent boys from the age of fifteen upwards.

London, *October*, 1905.

Let Youth but Know

I

AN UNDERGRADUATE

NOT long ago, I spent a day at Oxbridge with an undergraduate friend in his third term. Few youths could be, to all appearance, more happily situated; yet I found him dissatisfied with the place and discontented with his lot. This frame of mind was partly due, no doubt, to peculiarities of individual temperament, not to say temper. But, making all possible allowance for idiosyncrasy, one cannot but suspect something amiss in the educational system which, if it did not foster, at least failed to counteract the idiosyncrasy in question.

My young friend's case set me thinking. It was sad, it was almost tragic, that a lad of good physical health and good mental capacity,

at the age when all his forces, physical and mental, ought to be pleasurably, even rapturously, expanding, should, in spite of all outward advantages, let the irrecoverable months slip away in moody discontent. His days should have been as a rosary of priceless pearls, and he let them run through his fingers like beads of common glass. Why? Clearly in ignorance; among the many things he had learnt, he had not learnt the value of life. It was foolish of me to envy him and long to change places with him—unless, indeed, I could have transferred my soul of fifty into his body of twenty. Fate had given him a treasure-casket, but no key to unlock it; and education, failing in its primary duty, had not helped him to forge a key. "Its primary duty?" Yes, so I call it. That is just the view I have to urge.

All the way up to town that evening, the train ran to the rhythm of the old phrase, "Si jeunesse savait! Si jeunesse savait!" "Why should not youth know?" I asked myself. "Why should its best years be portioned out between dead task-work and idle child's-play, both seeming deliberately calculated to conceal from it the splendour and the mystery of this

strange adventure of life, on which, for a little space, it is embarked? We are given some two or three score years to enjoy the pageant of the universe and contemplate the miracle of existence; and we let our ingenuous youth waste their intelligence on dismal pedantries and their admiration on despicable trifles. Is it so surprising, after all, that my young friend should move as a blind man among 'the glories of his blood and state'?"

Before going any further, let me put this youth's case a little more in detail. His temperament, as I have admitted, may be in some measure exceptional, but his course of life has been absolutely typical. He is a fair average product of English middle-class education.

In ability he is above rather than below the average. After two years at a preparatory school, he passed with a junior scholarship into a large public school. His parents had no particular "views" as to his career, and he followed the line of least resistance. He showed no special aptitude for mathematics, or for such elementary science as came in his way; while, on the other hand, he did show a

distinct capacity for classics. Accordingly he went on the classical "side," and worked his way up quite normally. In due time he took a senior scholarship, reached the sixth form at a rather earlier age than usual, and eventually became head boy of the form and captain of the school. It was his misfortune—I say it in all seriousness—to be unable to carry through the outdoor side of his school life as normally as the indoor side. Up to the age of fifteen or sixteen he was slightly delicate, and was, by doctor's orders, debarred from playing football. For cricket he showed no particular aptitude, and (betraying herein, I think, a flaw of character) he consequently did not cultivate it. Fives he played with zest, and he became a passable fencer. But his real outdoor interests were rowing and racquets. He was one of the best racquet-players in the school.

This reads like a highly prosperous school career; nor is the appearance entirely fallacious. One point I wish to emphasise: namely, that my young friend was exceptionally fortunate in his masters. If anything was amiss, it was the system, not the men who administered it. The Headmaster he regarded, and justly, with unqualified respect and affection. The

sixth-form master was an excellent scholar and amiable man, with whom his boys stood on the best of terms. The current objection to a "classical education"—that it teaches boys neither classics nor anything else—did not apply in this case. The youth in question, and a considerable number of his schoolmates, did actually acquire a competent knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, and learned to take more or less pleasure in some of the authors they read. It was their own fault, too, if they did not gain a fair command of French and a smattering of mathematics. The school, in short—if I am not mistaken—was well above the average in the efficiency of its educational mechanism.

Following, then, the normal course, my young friend competed for and won an open scholarship at one of the most famous colleges in Oxbridge; and there, at the beginning of his third term, I went to visit him.

What was his frame of mind? He was a member of an ancient and splendid foundation, mother of many illustrious sons; but if the thought gave him any pleasure, it was so slight as to form no appreciable factor in his mental state. He occupied beautiful rooms,

looking out upon one of the most beautiful prospects in a city of no less beauty than renown—and he regarded it all, not only without enthusiasm, but almost with distaste. He moved every day among noble buildings, pregnant with historical and personal associations—and he did not care to inform himself of them. Knowing practically nothing of the political or spiritual history of his country, he was naturally indifferent to the part which Oxbridge had played in it. He had brought with him the requisites neither for a vivid enjoyment nor for a reasonable criticism of the place, its traditions, and its methods. He was not pinched for money; the fault did not lie there. He was not without friends—but he carefully selected those from whom he could receive no intellectual stimulus. His school life, in short, had left him with an unwakened imagination, an atrophied intelligence, a patriotism indistinguishable from the most primitive tribal instinct, and not the remotest realisation of the splendour of his heritage either as an Englishman or as a citizen of the world.

"He was an exceptionally stupid boy," you may say. His masters called him brilliant.

"Perhaps he had been overworked — over-crammed." He had always worked with conscientious diligence; but all that he did came easy to him, and he spent fewer hours over his books than did most of his comrades and competitors. "His home influences, then, had been hostile to his intellectual expansion." If so, the hostility had taken the shape of over-encouragement; but there had been no forcing of any sort. The one definite factor, outside the schoolroom, that had been clearly unfavourable to his development, was his partial disability in athletics. Finding how little his scholastic distinction counted among his fellows in comparison with the athletic distinctions he could not attain, he was led to place an exorbitant value on the muscular as opposed to the mental life. Thus he went up to Oxbridge despising, almost resenting, his own talents, and with his whole heart set upon childish things.

"Clearly there was some odd kink in this boy's mind." Yes; but his education, which ought to have straightened it out, had rather drawn it tighter. "He seems to have suffered from a curious aridity of soul." Yes; but his education had, if not created the desert, at any

rate failed to irrigate and fertilise it. Will Oxbridge itself succeed any better? It seems very doubtful. The chances are that, five-and-twenty years hence, as he begins to feel the horizon of his life contract, he will gradually realise what the world is and what Oxbridge might have been, and will say to himself, as I do now, "If youth but knew!"

It is not as an exception, but as a type, that I place him before the reader. He may have a little more ability than is usually associated with such a frame of mind; but the frame of mind itself—the absorption in childish things, coupled with extreme obtuseness to the glories, privileges, and potentialities of life—is absolutely normal. The obtuseness may be more wilful in him than in the average English boy; but, if so, that is the sole peculiarity of his case.

Now I believe that no boy who is not far below the average in intelligence need go up to the University, or forth into the world, in this state of spiritual torpor. I believe that the efficiency, the morality, and above all the happiness of coming generations might be incalculably promoted by a radical change in our system of education. I believe that the

conscious and deliberate aim of education should be to enable a man, in the fullest sense of the word, to *enjoy* life; and that the enjoyment of life, for any one who has time and means to cultivate his intelligence, is partly, no doubt, dependent on the gratification of physical appetite and the exertion of physical energy, but far more essentially and permanently on the intellectual apprehension of the sublimities and mysteries of the universe and of the human lot.[1] Half of our discontent with life arises, like my young friend's discontent with Oxbridge, from sheer blindness to the splendours of our environment — a cataract which education scarcely attempts, and in most cases wholly fails, to remove.

POSTSCRIPT.—IS HE TYPICAL?—It is said that the undergraduate here depicted is quite an exception. What I believe to be excep-

[1] Of Thomas Wedgwood: "His life-long dream was to promote happiness on earth, not by the multiplication of mechanical appliances for comfort and pleasure, but by the evolution of a Race gifted with powers of intellectual enjoyment, larger than those of man as he now exists." M. E. Boole: *The Preparation of the Child for Science*, p. 7.

tional in his case is this: the system, which has dulled instead of stimulating his intellectual interests, has not impaired his conscientiousness. He feels bound to grapple honestly with the tasks which have so little attraction for him: whence the element of moroseness in his state of mind. Many young men in his place would take their tasks very lightly, and fling themselves heart and soul into the mere pastimes of University life. My young friend gives to these a fair proportion of his time; but the sense of having to devote so great a part of his life to work which does not vividly interest him, for the sake of passing examinations which lead to nothing he specially cares about, weighs upon his mind now and then, and prevents him from feeling the frank enjoyment of Oxbridge, which is, I daresay, common enough among his fellows.

That his intellectual condition is not singular I could prove by a host of witnesses. For the present, the following passage from *The Upton Letters* may suffice: "I grow every day more "despondent about the education we give at "our so-called classical schools. Here, you "know, we are severely classical; and to have "to administer such a system is often more

"than I can bear with dignity or philosophy. "One sees arrive here every year a lot of "brisk, healthy boys, with fair intelligence, "and quite disposed to work; and at the other "end one sees depart a corresponding set of "young gentlemen who know nothing, and can "do nothing, and are profoundly cynical about "all intellectual things. And this is the result "of the meal of chaff we serve out to them "week after week; we collect it, we chop it "up, we tie it up in packets; we spend hours "administering it in teaspoons, and this is the "end."

I will not go so far as to say that the youth of whom I write is "cynical" about all intellectual things, but rather that he is unawakened. Nor is it true that he "knows nothing"; the trouble is that most of what he knows is, or seems to him, irrelevant, unnourishing—a "meal of chaff." A good deal of it, no doubt, cannot rightly be so described; but wherever the fault may be, the fact remains that he gets little spiritual nutriment out of it.

"I venture to think," says one of my critics, "that 'Kappa' is wrong psychologically about "his imaginary or typical undergraduate—the "scholar who did brilliantly at school but has

"no intellectual interests and chooses friends "of the most unstimulating description. I "know the kind of undergraduate well, but "I diagnose his case differently. He is suffer- "ing not from a lack of intellectual stimulus 'but from one of the many varieties of over- "work. He has put a lot of hard brain labour "into his main business, which happens to have "been classical scholarship, and when that is "done he has no spare energy for studying "architecture or *belles-lettres*. I suspect that "he reads old *Punches*."

This diagnosis is doubtless correct; but if it be intended as a defence of the system, I cannot think it successful.

II

THE CHIEF END OF MAN

A CERTAIN amount of education must be merely utilitarian; that is to say, directly subservient to the practical ends of life. This education begins when the child is taught to use a spoon. It continues when the boy learns his letters and his multiplication-table. It ends, for millions of hapless youths, in the acquisition of a trade, handicraft, or business routine, which they go on practising, mechanically and joylessly, until their mechanism is worn out and they are cast on the scrap-heap. Many more happily-situated youths never get beyond the utilitarian stage of education; for though they may "read up" Plato and master the Differential Calculus, it is all with a direct view to their worldly advancement, not to the saving of their souls alive.

Their book-reading has no more spiritual value than book-keeping or book-making. But it is generally admitted that the teaching which subserves mere appetite and ambition, even with a little judicious morality thrown in, is inadequate to the real needs of the human spirit. A "liberal education" is one in which the utilitarian element is strictly preliminary and subordinate. If, in the course of these reflections, I have to condemn the ordinary classical curriculum of our public schools, it will not be because it is un-utilitarian, but because it is inefficient as a means to higher ends.

What, then, is the fundamental task of a liberal education? What should be its constant endeavour? Surely to awaken and to keep ever alert the faculty of *wonder* in the human soul. To take life as a matter of course—whether painful or pleasurable—that is the true spiritual death. From the body of that death it is the task of education to deliver us.

The infant, fresh from non-existence, or (spite of Wordsworth) oblivious of pre-existence, gazes at the world with wondering eyes. But before he can tell himself of his wonder, it has been swallowed up in familiarity. He has fallen in with the jog-trot sequence of things. There is

a stage, indeed, in which he asks, "Why? why? why?" and I suspect that, even at this first awakening of his intelligence, he ought not to be put off with the ordinary evasions and cut-and-dried formulas. But on this point I do not insist, leaving it to the discussion of child-psychologists. What is certain is that, unless he be a child of genius, he comes to school with his sense of wonder dulled, or diverted entirely to things remote and fabulous, to mythological or theological marvels. Certainly I am no enemy to fairy-tales. They are the healthful playground of the childish imagination, keeping it in exercise at a period when it is as yet unable to grasp or grapple with the wonders of the real world. The trouble is that the fading of fairyland leaves the average child in a wholly prosaic environment of alternate "lessons" and games. The utilitarian, or, at most, the judiciously moral, aspect of education is constantly forced upon him. The "liberal" aspect, if it is suggested at all, seems to him a myth, or one of the organised hypocrisies of his elders. He is told that he will one day find a world of pleasure in, or through, the things that are now meaningless tasks to him; but he has no lively faith in this promise; and, as a rule, his scepticism is

justified. At best, the pleasure he is asked to find will be a mere external adjunct to his practical and moral life—a harmless, perhaps a stimulating, pastime. As if we were such multi-millionaires of time that we must labour to perfect ourselves in devices for getting rid of it!

My definition, then, of a liberal as distinct from a merely utilitarian education would be this: a course of training which arouses and sustains in the mind of its subject a vivid realisation of the miracle of existence. We move in the midst of a stupendous fairy-tale, compared with which the most fantastic Arabian Night is humdrum and pedestrian. What was Aladdin's Palace to the dome of the million jewels which is nightly builded over our heads, marvellous to the eye, but incomparably more marvellous to the mind? What were the Adventures of Sindbad compared with the toils and vicissitudes, the triumphs and defeats, of our fathers and our brothers, the race of man on earth? We are compassed about with glories and mysteries, and we feed our children's souls on Greek accents and bowling averages! What wonder if, in James Elia's phrase, "these fine, ingenuous lads are presently changed into frivolous Members of Parliament"!

Emerson has somewhere said: "If the stars came out only once in a thousand years, how men would wonder and adore and preserve for countless generations the memory of the City of God which they had seen!" It should be the business of education to make this miracle "new to us every evening." And I speak, of course, of the stars merely as the most obvious of the manifestations of the great Thaumaturge. Here we have immensity obtruded on us, flung at us, so to speak, almost ostentatiously. But the wonder of the infinite is no greater than the wonder of the infinitesimal. Conception is baffled at both ends of the scale.[1] There are moods when the forces which hold the suns and systems suspended seem to us less incredible than the energies which lurk in a single molecule of matter. But it is idle to weigh marvel against marvel, as though our separation and classification of them were not a mere fiction of convenience. All are involved in each, and each in all; yet, if we must speak of greater and less, the greatest of all marvels is surely the handful of matter, temporarily encased in a roundish box of bone, which can mirror and analyse and weigh and name and recombine

[1] Appendix A, p. 209.

the phenomena of the universe, and, passing beyond phenomena, can even speculate, however impotently, on the reality behind them. We are miracles immersed in miracle; and we have nothing better to make of our little span of consciousness than to provide for our physical needs, and then fling away in child's-play (more or less disguised) whatever residue of time may be left over.

You remember that admirable passage of Stevenson's in which he contrasts the two first questions of the English and Scottish Catechisms—"the English tritely inquiring 'What is your name?' the Scottish striking at the very roots of life with 'What is the chief end of man?' and answering nobly, if obscurely, 'To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.'" The obscurity of this answer lies solely in its first clause. How can man "glorify" God? That is indeed obscure.[1] The phrase is a survival from a low stage of anthropomorphism. But there is no obscurity about the second clause

[1] It is pointed out to me that "glorify" is here only a synonym for "praise"; I had taken it to mean "enhance the glory of." To praise God is, of course, possible enough, and may be reasonable enough, so long as it is clearly understood that it is man, and not God, who profits by the exercise.

—to "enjoy Him for ever." Save for that poverty of language which compels us "to narrow the Supreme with sex," it expresses with perfect accuracy the chief end of man. Not necessarily the end for which he was "intended," but assuredly the end which he should deliberately propose to himself—and the end, as I suggest, which education should, from an early stage, deliberately and sedulously subserve.

It may be well to guard against a possible ambiguity in the word "enjoy." Does it seem to make optimism a foregone conclusion? Not at all, as I conceive it. The intellectual "enjoyment" of the scheme of things neither implies an optimistic nor excludes a pessimistic judgment of it. When I pay a visit to the dentist, I enjoy the contemplation of all the truly exquisite apparatus of his art: yet I would very much rather, if I might, refrain altogether from that enjoyment. One may find the keenest enjoyment in studying the genius and exploits of, say, Napoleon, though, as the study proceeds, one may feel more and more convinced that he was an unmitigated curse to humanity. "Yes," it may be said, "we can enjoy the recollection of bygone ills that befell other

people; but how about the 'instans tyrannus'? Did his own generation, the men who suffered and died for and through him, 'enjoy' the contemplation of his genius?" Assuredly; thousands did. Other thousands, of course, did not. They had no eyes for his greatness, and either blindly hated him, or accepted his existence and its effects, like any other disease or disaster, with dull incomprehension. Just so is the mass of mankind incapable of enjoying the works of the Supreme Imperator whose conscripts we all are; and it is precisely this incapacity which a liberal education ought to remove. The clearest vision, indeed, is far enough from fathoming his strategy, his whole plan of campaign; but his marvellous tactics we can partially discern and admire. And surely it is better that we should do so than that we should go forth to the battle blindly, like the beasts that perish. We may or may not wish that the campaign had never been undertaken; we may or may not regret having been pressed into the service. But whether we approve it or no, the great Expedition will go on; and we may as well play our ineluctable part in it with an intelligent zest. Does not its romance, its fascination, lie in the very

obscurity of its Whence? Why? and Whither?

In another essay, Stevenson wishes "that there had been some one to put him in good heart about life when he was younger." That is mere common sense. It is a crime to depress the spirits of youth; and, in these days of mild and unsulphureous theology, it is (one is glad to believe) an infrequent crime. Moreover, the instinctive shrinking from life, the shallow cynicism, the half-affected Byronism, that sometimes beset adolescence, ought to be judiciously combated. But I would no more inculcate a dogmatic optimism than a systematic pessimism. Teach youth to see, to understand, to wonder; then let it judge for itself.

There are two main lines on which a liberal education, thus conceived, ought to proceed. We should either study the architecture of Aladdin's Palace or critically investigate the Adventures of Sindbad. Up to a certain point both lines should be pursued; but most of us would presently find ourselves impelled by an innate preference to specialise on one or the other.

III

ALADDIN'S PALACE

WHAT, in plain English, do I mean by saying that a liberal education ought to deal either with Aladdin's Palace or with the Adventures of Sindbad, and, up to a certain point, with both? I hope the reader already holds the key to this very simple enigma; so he will perhaps bear with me if I try to lead up to the definite statement of my meaning by a little further illustration.

Looking from my study window this bright May morning, what do I perceive? A stretch of undulating country, arable, pasture, and woodland; a slow river winding down a broad, softly-moulded valley; a vast expanse of sky, with white clouds combed out, as it were, into the pale blue. It is a pretty picture; but, because I have been badly educated, I can see in it little more than its pictorial charm.

Tardy self-education, however, has taught me to lament my unseeing eye and uncomprehending mind. Looking at the trees, flowers, grasses, I can name, with hesitation, a few of their commonest species ; but even of their nomenclature I am mainly ignorant, and much more of their structure, their classification, their life-history. Yet each of these myriad objects is a living thing of exquisite adjustments and complexities. The chemistry of its generation, nutrition, pigmentation—the instinct by which it draws from earth and air just those elements required for the dreeing of its weird in growth, reproduction, and decay—is ultimately, indeed, an unfathomable mystery, but may be watched in its processes, studied in its results. Take yonder oak-tree, for example—what an august being it is ! How it beggars the imagination to conceive the silent tenacity of purpose which, working through century after century, has drawn together "the stuff of life to knit it," to robe it in its yearly marvel of leafage, and swell its girth by ring on ring ! Had I, as a boy, been taken to that tree, and judiciously helped to study it and realise it in its majestic individuality, and in its relations to plant life at large, I should to-day have been a wiser and, I

doubt not, a happier man. As it was, I passed the whole vegetable world by, unseeing, unwondering. It was a matter of course; it was dead to me, or (much more truly) I was dead to it. Too late, I have come to life a little. A tree awakens in me a vague reverence, a flower a shamefaced worship; and by these feelings the intensity of life is indefinitely enhanced for me. Was I, forty years ago, such a young dolt as to be quite inaccessible to them? I doubt whether my educators, on the Day of Wrath, will be able to plead that justification. And when, as sometimes happens, I hear a schoolboy express his contempt for flowers, I could weep as I say to myself "If youth but knew!"

So much for the carpet of Aladdin's Palace, laid down each year afresh, and shifting in its hues and pattern with every week and day. But what of the floor on which the carpet is spread? How is it laid? and on what foundations?

On one of the slopes over which my eye ranges is a strip of naked soil, ploughed and harrowed. Whence comes its texture? Whence its russet tinge? I know, though I cannot actually see, that this slope is covered with

myriads of loose stones, ranging from the size of a pigeon's egg to the bulk of my two fists. What Titan was at the pains of thus gravelling the lea for miles and miles? That clump of beeches away to the west marks an old chalk-pit; I infer from its shining cliff that the reddish soil is only a thin layer, covering a vast bed of white rock. What *is* this chalk? On examination I shall find it to consist of unimaginable myriads of once living creatures, solidified as in a hydraulic press. In the chalk, too, there are larger fossils—how came they there?

And I know that the chalk itself is only a layer, like the upper soil. Deeper sections, which I have seen elsewhere, show me other layers, piled in their order, sometimes flat as a plate of sandwiches, sometimes crumpled, twisted, even tilted on end. Everywhere there is order, everywhere the unmistakable evidence of giant forces in conflict, as though one race of genies had striven to smooth the floor horizontally, while another mischief-making tribe had everywhere laboured, by vertical action, to emboss and corrugate the pavement their rivals had laid down. Then, again, I contrast in my mind the gentle contours of this buxom land-

scape with the flat expanses of fen-land and prairie, and with the ravines and precipices, soaring peaks and jagged sierras, of a mountainous country. Whence these differences? What power has sculptured the surface of the earth, padded here and denuded there, and veined it all with an inconceivable network of running water, from the tiny driblet that bubbles up in a wrinkle of the moors to the great river that forms the artery of a continent? And this water itself! What is it? Whence comes it? That shining streak in the bottom of the valley, ever shifting, never ceasing, voluble throughout the ages — why have I but the vaguest notions of the laws that compound and control it? Partly, no doubt, because I was an idle and stupid boy, but also, I venture to think, because my pastors and masters were stupider and idler still. I grew up with all these marvels before my eyes; but it was never suggested to me that I should observe them, much less that I should investigate or reason about them.

The study of the rocks and mountains—the floor and pillars of Aladdin's Palace—is surely one of the most fascinating to which the mind can be applied, and might be made so even to

quite young children. The elements of physiography present themselves in little wherever rain falls and water flows; every cliff or land-slip, quarry or excavation, is a frontispiece to the wonder-book of geology, with all its beautiful inferences and far-reaching revelations. From the merely utilitarian point of view, as a gymnastic of the reasoning faculties, geology ought to rank high among the instruments of education.

Again I look from my window, and, beyond the fleecy canopy of cloud, I see a turquoise dome lighted by a floating globe of fire—a more "wonderful lamp," even to the uninstructed eye, than ever glowed in the wildest Oriental fantasy. And I know that the luminous pavilion in which it floats is a mere illusion of the sense, veiling for the moment immeasurable altitudes of space and unimaginable galaxies and glories. Here, indeed, the architectural image breaks down and becomes hopelessly belittling—even when it is Shakespeare who speaks of "this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire." Architecture, be it never so fabulous, implies immobility and limitation. What we have here to realise is that there

is no vault, no dome, no firmament; no immobility, no limitation; but that the little speck of matter to which we cling is like a dancing mote in a sunbeam, among an inconceivable whirl of other motes, many of them a thousand times its size, yet all infinitesimal in comparison with the immensity which envelops them.

Let us have done, then, with the poor symbol of Aladdin's Palace. I have played with it mainly to defer as long as possible the employment of the Greek names given by our fathers to the various branches of nature-study. Botany, physiography, geology, astronomy, are apt to seem crushingly disproportionate in relation to the childish mind. But surely there is nothing unreasonable in the idea that, step by step with the natural growth of his intelligence, a boy ought to be initiated into the wonders of flower-lore, plant-lore, earth-lore, cloud-lore, rock-lore, star-lore—probably in something like the order here indicated. This is such a plain measure of common sense that the prejudices which to-day cause us to neglect it will seem scarcely credible a hundred years hence.[1]

It will seem absolutely incredible, I believe, that thousands of boys should go through an

[1] Appendix B, p. 211.

elaborate and expensive education (as I did and as my undergraduate friend has done) without once looking through either a microscope or a telescope. Yet the fact is merely typical. This deliberate limitation of physical vision accurately parallels the deliberate limitation of mental vision which underlies so much of our educational theory and practice. What could be more delightful or more awakening to any intelligent boy than the judicious use of either of these instruments? Why should we refuse to avail ourselves of the childish love of a toy because it happens to be the toy of Galileo and of Herschel, and the indispensable instrument of cosmical illumination? The day is surely not far distant when every well-situated and well-equipped school will possess a telescope of reasonable power, for the use, on fitting occasion, not of the "science side" alone, but of every boy who has eyes in his head and a brain behind them.[1]

"And amid all your 'lores,' where does life-lore come in?" Life-lore, as we know, has two Greek equivalents—zoology and biology. The enumerations and classifications of zoology are so essentially attractive to children that

[1] Appendix C, p. 215.

some instruction in them might probably precede all the rest. Then, in its due course, geology would lead up to the rudiments of biology ; and by the time the youthful mind was ready to conceive them, it would be brought face to face with the absorbing problems of the Origin of Species and the Descent of Man.

" In short, you would simply substitute a scientific curriculum for the classical and literary curriculum hitherto implied in a 'liberal education'?"

Not at all ; we have not yet reached the point at which we can profitably consider the due place and function of classics in a rational scheme of training. We have not yet arrived at the parting of the ways. All that I have hitherto urged is that every boy, whatever course of study or path of life he is ultimately to follow, should be encouraged and assisted to use his eyes, and not to let the fog of unthinking familiarity shut him off from the marvels he daily and nightly sees around him, on earth and in the heavens. He can proceed in science so far as I have indicated without a single numerical calculation or quantitative analysis.

" He can become a shallow smatterer, in fact!"

Alas! we must be content in this life to be smatterers in most things, if only we can go a little deeper into one or two. But I do not think that a knowledge in wide outline of the phenomena and processes of nature, accompanied by a habit of noting them with wonder instead of passing them by in dull indifference, can rightly be called a smattering.

Many boys, of course, would find in one or more of these branches of science the main interest of their lives. They would cease to "smatter"; they would concentrate, specialise, and enrol themselves by natural affinity in one or other corps of the great army of searchers into the arcana of nature. But whatever is to be a man's main interest and pursuit, he cannot afford to shut himself up in it until he has a clear general conception of that marvellous concatenation of phenomena in the midst of which his lot is cast. To whichever of the Muses he may ultimately swear allegiance, he must first do homage to those Titan sisters of an elder race, Astronomy and Geology. Geology teaches us the meaning of Time, Astronomy carries us as near as the mind can go to the conception of Eternity.

In Aladdin's Palace, then, I feebly figured

the domain of Science. Still more feebly, perhaps, the Adventures of Sindbad shadowed forth the chequered fortunes of humanity in this, its obscure corner of the universe. In my next chapter I shall try to co-ordinate History with Science as the twin-constituent in a liberal education.

IV

THE ADVENTURES OF SINDBAD

ONCE more I look abroad from my study window, but this time with a different preoccupation. What I saw before—whether with the bodily or the mental eye—was a clot of matter orbed in the turning-lathe of cosmic forces; swinging with headlong velocity round one of an infinite host of incalculably greater orbs; carrying with it an atmosphere of subtle and complex chemistry; swathed about with life-giving oceans; its crust built up and crumbled down by the patient energies of ten thousand ages; and clad as to its surface in a motley robe, woven of myriads of living, multiplying, and dying organisms, some of which, by an ultimate miracle, have broken loose from their roots, and move palpitating through the atmosphere, on wings, or hooves, or feet—or motor-bicycles. Now, as I look

around, I fix my attention on another order of phenomena : those associated with the mental as distinct from the merely vegetative functions of the organisms which, in the absence of auxiliary mechanism, move on two feet. These creatures have somehow developed the power of remembering, grouping, abstracting, recording, communicating their sense-impressions; of distinguishing between the I and the Not-I; of using tools; of telling stories and singing songs; of forming societies, offensive and defensive, which are themselves elaborate organisms; of killing each other with weapons of far wider range than the tooth and claw of nature; of disputing about the Whence, How, and Whither of life, and adopting theories for which they are willing to persecute or to die. This quaint race of beings at one time considered itself the end and object of all things, and believed that the earth had been sculptured and the heavens spangled for its special behoof and benefit. That now seems improbable; but Man's place in terrestrial nature is nevertheless unique. Even if we had no personal interest in the matter, the vicissitudes through which he has passed might well form the object of a rational curiosity.

From my point of outlook, then, what evidences do I see of the activities of this order of beings? I see men and women labouring the earth with various implements, some of them drawn by horses. I see a man on horseback inspecting and directing their work, and infer that he owes his place in the saddle to the fact of his having more money, and possibly more intelligence, than they. I see a large red-brick house, with classic pilasters and cornices, embowered in the ancient trees of a spacious and beautiful park. I know that it is not the home of the labourers in the field, nor even of the man on horseback, but of another man to whom he pays money for the privilege of using the land. At the same time I see people freely passing and repassing on several beaten paths across this "property," thus showing that the community has certain prescriptive rights, even as against the lords of the soil. A smooth, white road runs down the valley to my left, and along it pass all sorts and conditions of vehicles—from the brewer's dray and motor-car to the mechanic's third-hand bicycle. By the roadside stands a village of about a thousand people, with one church, one school, three chapels, and fourteen public-

houses. The church is many centuries old, and contains half-effaced brasses and tombs of knights in armour, with their ladies by their sides. Its architecture, its monuments, the doctrines preached in its pulpit, and the ritual conducted at its altar, are so many relics and vestiges, to the understanding mind, of the spiritual contests and compromises of two thousand years. Three other churches, at a greater distance, come within my view : symbols all of the pathetic, persistent craving of the human mind to commune and even bargain with the Mind by which it cannot but conceive itself surrounded. The spire of the furthest church marks the site of an ancient and famous public school, mother of at least one great poet, of several famous statesmen and soldiers, and of "thorough sportsmen" without number. I can hear an express train thundering along the railroad on the other side of the valley. It is one of the greatest of world-highways, issuing out from a giant city, a nation in itself, and carrying men the first stage of their journey to the remotest regions of the globe. It passes by earthworks piled by races whose very names are forgotten ; battlefields where the fate of dynasties was decided ; glorious cathedrals,

like arks left stranded on the hill-tops by the shrinking of a deluge of faith ; volcanic chains of furnaces, sending forth pillars of cloud by day, of fire by night; and vast, clanging factories, where the forces that for aeons lay dormant in matter have at last been enslaved by man, and have in their turn imposed on him the fetters of an abhorrent thraldom.

On every square inch, in fact, of this portion of the planet, unnumbered generations of men have left their stamp; and it is even now the abiding-place of a generation which is battling —blindly and purblindly, in wisdom and in folly—with the thousand problems of its own and its children's fate. Its name—England— is writ large in the annals of mankind for the past thousand years. It is a treasure-house of material beauty, and of great and inspiring, of humbling and chastening, memories. Love yearns toward it, hatred scowls at it. The burden of greatness lies heavy on it, and its sons are partakers in a tremendous responsibility; for it is one of the six or eight organised societies of men which must work out, in co-operation or in contest, the future of the race.

Through the open window floats the sound of a distant voice, and a nearer voice replies :

"I am coming immediately." The first three words call up before the mind's eye the Baltic fenland or Frisian forest whence they were imported fifteen hundred years ago. The last word, more sonorous and stately, "sounds for ever of Imperial Rome." Its syllables were heard in the four-square village on the Palatine, and were familiar to the lips of Cicero and Cæsar. Following further back the slender but tenacious clues of language, we find the Baltic and the Mediterranean dialects reunite in a primitive idiom, spoken, we can but vaguely guess where, by a people which sent forth wave on wave of conquerors and colonisers, ages before the dawn of history or even of tradition. Thus the words we use in common talk are seen to be living things, with an ancestry that takes us back far beyond the pyramids. They tell us, in outline, the story of our race, from an antiquity which makes the oldest graven record seem scarcely more venerable than a newspaper of to-day.

To the awakened intelligence, then, the common sights and sounds of an English countryside are only the last terms in a national record of two thousand years, a racial record of untold centuries. The records

themselves are, on the surface, full of colour, movement, incident, picturesqueness, alarums, excursions, and all that is attractive to the youthful mind. Their profounder significance, their psychological and sociological import, yields itself up, indeed, only to mature and earnest study. But the boy who learns to love the surface aspects of the past will not, as he grows older, rest content with the surface alone. He will seek for the motives and sources of things, and in doing so he will gain ever clearer insight into the laws which govern the destiny of mankind. The right understanding of the history of the past is indispensable to the rational moulding of the history of the future. Political action, unenlightened by history, is either fumbling empiricism or the reckless enforcement of prejudice and self-interest. Patriotism, unchastened by history, is ignorant tribal arrogance. What science is to the citizen of the universe, history is to the citizen of the political state—the illuminant and stimulant of his spiritual life.

"But history, to the average boy, is a dry and repellent subject." Yes—because it is taught in a dry and repellent fashion, which

makes it a dead burden on his memory, instead of a living appeal to his imagination. It is treated as a thing of little moment, to be wedged in among a crowd of more important and more "paying" subjects. The time assigned it is too short to admit of the awakening of any vivid and continuous interest. It is taught from unattractive, highly condensed handbooks, as tasteless as chemical food. It is seldom or never brought, by the aid of local association and application, into touch with the learner's own life. That he himself is made by history, and must make it in his turn, is the last thought that comes home to him.

Here, again, as it seems to me, the radical error lies in our neglect of the fundamental task of education — the awakening of the faculty of wonder. It is, in very deed, a strangely romantic adventure in which we are summoned to bear a part; and nothing but the impotence of our methods prevents us from enabling any fairly intelligent boy to realise the fact. Out of the mists of the unfathomable past there crawls into our ken a being in whom we with difficulty, and not without horror, recognise our own form and

lineaments. He is a comparatively weak animal among monsters such as now people our nightmares; but in his brain there lurks a cunning, and in his hands a dexterity, that are better than strength. His babblings, at first mere emotional and imitative noises, become gradually symbolic, and shape themselves into speech. He distinguishes between himself and the inexpressive animals around him, and calls himself Man. He covers himself with skins and seeks shelter in caves. Then he stumbles upon the secret of fire-making, fashions himself weapons and tools of wood and stone, and begins to subdue other animals to his uses. After a few ages, he learns to wattle a hut on a defensible mound or to drive piles into shallow water and build his cabin upon them. The baking of clay and the smelting of metals are gradually mastered, and art begins in the rude patterns which he scratches on his pots and weapons. Meanwhile the forces of Nature and the mysteries of life and death have been inspiring him with crude fancies which, handed on with infinite variations from father to son, have grown into a body of grotesque myths, clustering round a system of witchcraft and anti-witchcraft in

which lies the germ of religion. The outlines of this anthropological prologue to history, illustrated by reference to the savage races of to-day and yesterday, could most assuredly be made fascinating to the boyish mind.

Then, in the teeming valleys of the great rivers of the East, enormous empires loom upon our view, in which myriads of men are held in servitude by a kingly or a priestly caste. They pile and hew great monuments, they invent hieroglyphs and letters, they war upon and devour each other from dynasty to dynasty. But meantime, in a little corner of mountainous country, with a deeply-indented coastline, an immigrant tribe has suddenly—in the course of a few centuries, that is to say—rushed through all the stages of barbarism, and stands, in some respects, on the very summit of civilisation. In sculpture and in one type of architecture it has reached the limit of conceivable perfection. It has laid the cornerstones of the world's poetry and philosophy. It has gained signal victories against overwhelming odds in a life-and-death struggle with one of the giant empires of Asia; and it has sent forth a young warrior, who has marched conquering from the Strymon to the

Indus, and has built a new empire out of the fragments of those he has shattered. Am I wrong in calling the methods of teaching impotent which can present the glorious romance of Hellas in such a way as to leave a single boy under the impression that history is "dry"?

"But if you make a romance of history you deprive it of its educative value!" With this objection I shall deal in another chapter, after rapidly sketching, from my point of view, the remainder of the Adventures of Sindbad.

V

THE ROMANCE OF RELIGION

WHILE the glories of Hellas are culminating and declining, a little commonwealth of husbandmen and herdsmen, entrenched on some slight eminences among the marshes of the Tiber, is gradually spreading its rule over the central Mediterranean peninsula. Its origins are lost in picturesque legend; but it steps forth into the clear light of history as a highly-developed political and military organisation. It goes through startling vicissitudes; it fights for its life against a seafaring power of Oriental origin, which disputes with it the command of the Mediterranean; step by step it spreads its empire over the whole basin of the midland sea, absorbing not only Gaul and Spain and Africa, but Hellas itself and the conquests of Alexander; its mighty soldiers fall to quarrelling over the

spoils, and legion hurtles against legion in a series of civil wars, which bring to the front one of the most consummate geniuses, and many of the most striking individualities, the world has ever seen. Finally, an astute politician inherits and realises the master-thought of the genius aforesaid, and the Roman Empire becomes, for some centuries, a circle of dazzling light, encompassed by the thick darkness of multitudinous and menacing barbarism. But within the circle of light what incredible things are happening! High civilisation and heroic virtue jostle with blind savagery, insensate cruelty, and monstrous vice. Now and then a great character seems, for a few years, to stem the tide of decadence; but the moment he is gone it rushes wildly onward with redoubled force. Among the adventures of humanity, if the story of Greece is the most wonderful, the story of declining Rome is surely the most tragic. A creeping paralysis seems to overmaster the human eye, the human hand, the human brain, the human heart, until a whole world of pride and glory sinks to ruin in hopeless debility and corruption. He must be a dull boy indeed whose imagination cannot be touched by this tremendous spectacle.

Meantime, while the Empire is at its height, there goes forth from the little kingdom of Judæa the rumour of certain strange events said to have happened in the valley of the Jordan. A Teacher has appeared, calling himself the Son of God; has preached a humane and exquisite morality; and has met with martyrdom at the hands of His fellow-countrymen, thereby assuaging, it is declared, though by no means extinguishing, the wrath of His Father against the sinful race of men. Gradually the doctrines of this Teacher, with the glosses upon them put forth by an early disciple, of a fiery dialectical and moral genius, permeate the thought of the Roman world. A subtle theology grows up around them, and an elaborate system of ritual and church-government. For the nicest distinctions of thought, and the most trivial divergences of practice, men are willing to fight with fury and to die in torments. The State, at first indifferent or hostile to the new religion, is ultimately conquered by it. As the power of the Roman Emperor wanes, that of the Roman Pontiff waxes. The barbarians who subjugate the Empire are themselves subjugated by the Church. The religion of Christ spreads slowly

but surely to the extremities of Europe, until, with the dawn of the Middle Ages, we find a spiritual unity, or rather duality, replacing the political unity (or duality) of the Roman world. Under the Principate there were many faiths but one rule; under the Papacy, many rules but one faith.

Now it matters not in this particular connection whether we regard Christianity as *the* religion or only as *a* religion: its history is in either case equally astonishing. If it contain the one true and ultimate revelation of the origin and destiny of man, how must we marvel at the dark counsels of the Power which selected this particular time and method of promulgating its designs! Through countless ages, and over the whole surface of the planet, lived innumerable generations of men who never heard or dreamed of their true Creator. Then He revealed Himself to a particular Semitic tribe, through a figurative cosmogony which, for many centuries, He suffered to be interpreted literally, and through a code of conduct, excellent indeed, but not beyond the excogitation of human wisdom. The favoured tribe kept its knowledge of the Creator jealously to itself, until in the fulness of time it pleased

Him to extend to a wider circle, through a mystical process of self-incarnation and sacrifice, the means of knowing and propitiating Him. Even then the revelation was extremely gradual; and it has remained to this day so partial that vast and populous regions of the earth are practically untouched by it, so obscure that even the peoples who nominally accept it are violently at odds with themselves and with each other as to its true interpretation. Before such facts as these, the human intelligence cannot but be lost in wonder. Until, in the consummation of all things, man's reason is made one with God's, the rise and progress of the Christian religion must remain the strangest, the most incomprehensible, phenomenon of history.

If, on the other hand, we regard Christianity as only one religion among many—an emanation, like the rest, of man's reason and unreason, his fear and awe and yearning—then it becomes, to the eye of the imagination, no longer incomprehensible (save as everything is incomprehensible), but infinitely curious, picturesque, and pathetic. The product of the literary genius of a small nation and the moral genius of a single man, it has outstripped all its com-

petitors in flexibility and adaptability; has taken on the mental colouring of a score of different races; has undergone every sort of corruption, and inspired every sort of fanaticism, of tyranny, of cruelty, of hypocrisy; has begotten hosts of admirable martyrs and not a few adorable saints; has withal laid lighter shackles on the human intelligence than any of its great rivals; and has consequently been, if not the cause, at any rate the concomitant, of the most notable advances, moral and material, made by the inhabitants of the planet during the past thousand years. No other religion has reared such mighty temples, has developed so gorgeous a hierarchy, or has produced (often, it must be owned, indirectly or by way of reaction) so much glorious art and literature. To reflect that St. Peter's at Rome and the wooden meeting-house of a New England village spring from the same initial impulse, and are devoted, nominally, to the service of the same God, is to realise, in some measure, the manifold picturesqueness of this adventure of the human spirit which we call Christianity.

It sometimes seems to me that a great Christian church—St. Peter's, or a French cathedral, or Westminster Abbey—ought to

be more impressive to an unbeliever than to a believer. To the latter it is the place of official communication with a Power which, though inscrutable in its workings, has once for all revealed itself to man and entered into formal covenants with him. It is the symbol of a partial—the promise of a complete—solution of the mystery of existence. It is, no doubt, a gateway into the infinite, but into a definite infinite, so to speak, which has roughly mapped itself out, submitted itself, in part, to the exploration of the human faculties, and accepted a local habitation and a name. To the unbeliever, on the other hand, to whom St. Peter's is only the stupendous symbol of a world-hallucination—the monster soap-bubble of an illusory metaphysic—its significance ought to be, if not profounder, at any rate more human and more pathetic. Picture the gigantic effort that went to the rearing and the adornment of this fane; multiply that effort many-millionfold in respect of all the tabernacles, great and small, which faith, or policy aping faith, has reared and consecrated for the dwelling-place of omnipresent deity; think of the hopes and terrors which for myriads of souls have clustered round these shrines and sanctuaries;

then conceive that the shrines are empty, the sanctuaries untenanted, the hopes as well as the terrors mere figments of human fantasy! When you have carried your mind through this process, you will have arrived, not, surely, in "rationalism," but in a sense of inexpressible awe at the frenzied efforts of man's reason to grapple with the problems of life and death, of sin and suffering, of the beginning of things and the end. Who would not think himself living in a fairy-tale if he could, for a single hour, take part with the crowd of living and believing worshippers in the Parthenon, or in the temple of Capitoline Jove or of the Ephesian Artemis? And would not the romance of the experience lie precisely in his unbelief? To the believers, the act of worship would be a piece of edifying, or merely prudential, routine; to the unbeliever from another age, it would be a magical vision, partly beautiful, partly grotesque, and pathetic altogether. But in St. Peter's and St. Paul's—aye, and in the little churches I see from my study window—a cult is daily proceeding beside which the worship of Athênê or Artemis or Jupiter Capitolinus was a veritable "paganism," a village superstition. It has an incomparably

longer and more tragic history, a host of more splendid temples, a more poetic and more sumptuous ritual, a thousandfold more highly-developed theology, and a world-wide instead of merely local or tribal dominion. If, then, this faith is, in my eyes, as much a delusion as the faith in the Olympian or Latian gods, how much greater, more amazing, more impressive, must this delusion be! If I can but read, or rather feel, world-history with that aloofness in which lies the very essence of romance, I need not go to St. Peter's or St. Paul's in order to experience the emotions of our imaginary visitor to a temple of pagan antiquity. Here, in my parish church, I may have the same sense of moving in an incredible fairy-tale, even while

> the kneeling hamlet drains
> The chalice of the grapes of God.

"And is this to be the outcome of an education in the 'romance' of history?—this 'aloofness' which regards Christianity simply as a picturesque 'adventure' of the human spirit?" No—neither necessarily nor commonly. My plea is neither for nor against Christianity, but simply for an education which shall beget and

foster a lively sense of the miracle of existence. Such a sense is in no way incompatible with Christian faith. Modern orthodoxy has so accommodated itself both to scientific and to historic data, that there is no longer any need for deliberate obscurantism in the training of the young. I am pleading, at all events, not for, but against, irreligion. The heathenism of the average boy who leaves our public schools is the very thing that I deplore. It is bad for his morality, his efficiency, his happiness. It is a calamity to the individual, and a danger to the State. But before fully developing this view, it is necessary that I should say something more of the place of history in education.

VI

WORLD-CITIZENSHIP AND STATE-CITIZENSHIP

OUR bird's-eye view of world-history brought us to the point at which Christianity had spread throughout, and beyond, the bounds of the Roman Empire. Like the Empire itself, it presently breaks up into an Eastern and a Western moiety; and while the supremacy of the Roman See secures for many centuries the spiritual unity of the Western section, that portion of Europe falls apart into the political and linguistic diversity which obtains to this day. Meanwhile, in Arabia, a new monotheism, far stricter and sterner than that of Rome or Constantinople, has sprung into existence, and, being wholly free from the spirit of com-

promise, has opposed an insuperable barrier to the spread of Christianity in Asia and Africa. The faith of Islam penetrates temporarily into the south-western peninsula of Europe; it seizes the south-eastern peninsula, and crushes in Constantinople the last faint flickerings of antique civilisation; and its occupation of Palestine leads to those strange outbreaks of national knight-errantry, the Crusades. When this ferment has died down, the spirit of adventure and of scientific curiosity leads men to tire of their timid coastwise navigation, and to put forth upon the uncharted main. Africa is circumnavigated, Eastern Asia explored, and a whole new hemisphere, of two vast continents, brought within the consciousness of the world. About the same time, a schism occurs in the Western Church, several nations renounce their allegiance to the Papacy, and wars of religion shake Central and Northern Europe. They are soon followed by the wars of colonisation, of expansion over the (comparatively) waste places of the earth, which endure to this day; and these, again, are varied by the wars of a political ideal of which we Anglo-Saxons have supplied the leading examples in our English

Civil War, American Revolution, and American Civil War. In the thirty years between 1785 and 1815, the French Revolution and the meteoric career of Napoleon add to history some of its most instructive and, at the same time, thrillingly dramatic pages. Finally, after the Napoleonic cataclysm, the Western world concentrates its energies on a fabulously rapid career of material progress—the perfection of machinery, the immense acceleration of travel, the practical annihilation of distance in the intercourse between mind and mind, the diffusion, not only of scientific devices, but of scientific forms of thought, and the invention, withal, of exquisite and costly engines of massacre, which render war more appalling and more ruinous than ever.

Mechanical magic remains a determining factor in the age of importunate problems and crass contradictions wherein we are living to-day. While we boast of our civilisation, savagery is at our very doors. The most elementary justice in the distribution of wealth remains everywhere a far-off aspiration. If we are not, like the Roman Empire, encircled by menacing barbarism, at any rate the march of civilisation is hampered on every hand by

obstinately retrograde religions, and races which, while incapable of progress, are tenacious of life. Nevertheless, the ideal to be aimed at—the stable partition and pacification of the planet—is distinctly dawning upon the human mind. The world of to-day has a decisive advantage over the world of any previous epoch, in its larger, clearer, and ever-clarifying self-consciousness. And this advantage it owes to history, read in the light of science. History is the memory of the race, the record of its experience; and the experience of the past, rightly interpreted, is the wisdom of the future.

I should be ashamed to reiterate such a truism, were it not systematically ignored in our public-school education. History is even more neglected than science. In some schools a boy can get a fair training in the utilitarian side of science, though its transcendental aspect is sedulously concealed from him — whence the amazing belief, held by so many worthy persons, that science "starves the imagination." But I have yet to hear of a school in which the Saga of Humanity is largely and luminously revealed to the average boy. Exceptional boys may develop a passion for history, and,

meeting with exceptional masters, may be enabled to gratify it. But ninety-nine boys out of a hundred have to content themselves with fragmentary, unvitalised, irrelevant glimpses of the dry bones of the past. History, for them, means a mass of names, dates, and apparently meaningless facts. Their memory soon shakes off the inert burden, which has never been brought into contact with their imagination or their intelligence.

Let me recur to an expression which I used a few sentences back ; it contains, in my view, the key to the problem. To the youthful mind—between the ages, say, of seven and fourteen—history ought rather to be "revealed" than "taught." The process should resemble the gradual withdrawal of a curtain and disclosure of a splendid and moving spectacle. Every lesson should end, like an instalment of a serial romance, with a tantalising "to be continued in our next." The teacher should be held to have mistaken his vocation who should fail to hold his pupils fascinated. To that end he should be supplied with all sorts of mechanical aids—relief-maps, coloured charts, diagrams, models, casts, photographs, and, above all, a lantern with an endless variety of

slides. The neglect of this means of education in anthropology, geography, and history is as stupid as the correlative neglect of the telescope and microscope in the teaching of science. But ultimately, of course, if the teacher is to awaken the imagination of his pupils, it must be through the sympathetic use of his own imagination. If the past is dead to him, it will remain dead to them. He will be helped, no doubt, by text-books written with a view to his requirements—very different from the abhorrent manuals and synopses and summaries of to-day. But the master who merely recites a text-book will never teach history, even though the text-book be the work of a man of genius.

Authorities are at odds, I understand, as to whether history should be taught (so to speak) forwards or backwards—whether the starting-point should be the Year One or the day before yesterday. My answer would be that instruction should begin at both ends; that the subject should be approached both from the planetary and from the parochial point of view. The planetary aspect should, no doubt, be presented first. Anthropology should have, by a few months or a year, the precedence of local

history, if only because the study of savage life and prehistoric conditions is so congenial to the mind which is itself passing through the savage phase of development. But before the boy or the form had proceeded very far in world-history, a second start should be made in local history; and the two lines of study, down-stream and up-stream—deductive and inductive, if I may so far misapply the terms—should be pursued until they meet. The boy should be made to feel, as early as possible, how history touches his daily life, how it has moulded the form of government under which he lives, and imposed on him the privileges and duties of citizenship. He should be taught to understand the place and function in the body politic of the soldier and the policeman, the tax-gatherer and the factory-inspector. Through his natural interest in the Navy of to-day, he should be led back to the stirring story of that struggle for sea-power which forms so large a part of the external history of England. He should be familiarised with the historic scenes and monuments around him, and taught to read their significance. The origin and associations of his school should be vividly brought home to him—an obvious act of piety which is too

often strangely neglected.[1] Excursions to places of historic significance, even beyond the immediate neighbourhood of the school, should form a regular part of the system of teaching. Why should not the railway, the bicycle, even the motor-car, be pressed—like the magic-lantern—into the service of education? The rudiments of architecture should find an early place in any reasonable course of history. By the aid of models and photographs, they might easily be made fascinating to almost every boy. In these and many other ways he should be made to feel the actual and seemingly prosaic life around him

[1] The following extract from *Hugh Rendal*—a novel, but evidently a very exact description of a particular school—will show how little effort is made to find an effective stimulus in historic associations:—"There were "ten such dormitories in 'College,' the central building "of the school, each pair in charge of one tutor, and each "containing some thirty boys. Members of the Peace "Society would probably frown at the names of these "dormitories—Senlac, Crecy, Agincourt, Blenheim, Mal-"plaquet, Plassy, Corunna, Trafalgar, Waterloo, and Inker-"man. But they would find, on looking into the matter, "that the associations connected therewith had little more "effect on the spirit of Larne than has their well-meaning "body on human nature at large. They simply stood for "so much strength at cricket and football."

insensibly merging in the picturesque, poetic past. He should learn to tread reverently on the soil of England, the scene of so majestic and thrilling an act in the drama of human destiny. His love for his country should be freed from all taint of childish, swaggering chauvinism, and should take the form, not of vaingloriousness, but of a high sense of responsibility ; so that, when he reaches manhood, he should know how to wear his citizenship

> Proudly, as kings their solemn robes of state ;
> And humbly, as the mightiest monarchs use.

What is the distinction between wise and foolish, progressive and retrogressive, patriotism ? What but this, that the foolish patriot loves his country as a thing apart, ignoring all the other nations which he does not happen to hate ; while the wise patriot loves his country as a factor, an important factor, and, if he can make it so, a beneficent factor, in the problem of the planet's future. Assuredly I shall not play well my part as a citizen of my country if I forget that I am also a citizen of the world. This is my ultimate, my one obligatory citizenship ; but I see that the destiny of the race

is working itself out through the interaction of a number of distinct political organisms; and my most obvious, if not my only, method of taking an (infinitesimally) effective share in world-history is to help, according to my lights, in shaping aright the thoughts and actions of my mother-country. History, then, should be so taught as to awaken the learner at once to his world-citizenship and to his duties as a member of a particular State. He is willy-nilly embarked aboard

> This labouring, vast Tellurian galleon
> Riding at anchor off the orient sun;

and his ultimate loyalty is due, no doubt, to the ship. But he is one of a particular gang told off for a special service; and his most seamanlike course is clearly to do his duty with right good will at the post which the Captain has assigned him.

This, at any rate, is certain: that patriotism, unsustained and unchastened by historical knowledge, is a sentiment worthy only of children, and scarcely to be encouraged even in them.

POSTSCRIPT: ON THE TEACHING OF HISTORY.—A critic whose authority I gladly acknowledge, inasmuch as I know him to be a most inspiring and illuminating teacher, has objected to the ideas above set forth, on the ground that they show inexperience on my part of the actual troubles a teacher of history has to encounter.

"Does 'Kappa' (he writes) realise the "immense difficulty of getting young boys to "understand history? I have tried it and "almost despaired. When once you come "to an end of simple stories, or issues that "can be resolved into a fight between a "'good' man and a 'bad,' you find that most "of the things you have to talk about in "history are utterly beyond a young boy's "experience or understanding. The taxes, the "Constitution, the rights of Parliament, the "freedom of the Press—things like these are "of the very essence of the subject, and they "are all unintelligible and uninteresting to "the young. I would sooner have to explain "the Ablative Absolute. I once consulted "three historians, of quite different antecedents, "about this difficulty. One said that no history "could be taught till the pupil was at the

"University; the others said that one should "not begin it till fifteen or sixteen."

To the inexperience at which "G. M." hints I must plead guilty. Yet am I not seriously dashed by his scepticism, nor even by the dicta of his three witnesses. His difficulty arose, I feel sure, from the fact that there is as yet no science of history-teaching in English schools, and that he, being only incidentally a teacher of history, had neither time nor means to develop one for himself.

What is implied in a science of history-teaching? It must evidently be the product of an experimental study of the child-mind, with a view to ascertaining what forms of historical knowledge it is capable of assimilating in the successive stages of its development. Remember that "history," as I employ the term, does not mean the particular group of "knowledges" cultivated, according to their respective methods, by Gibbon or Buckle, Michelet or Mommsen. It means the whole Saga of Humanity. Is it to be believed that there are not portions, and significant and vital portions, of that saga, which, properly imparted, will interest any fairly intelligent child, even at the age of six or seven? and

other portions suited progressively to every subsequent year of his life, up to maturity? To assure myself of this, I need but look back on my own experience and around at that of all the young boys I know. The natural curiosities of a boy of six have only to be intelligently enlisted and guided in order to afford him a very essential grounding in historical lore. The moment he is interested in Redskins, or Eskimos, or Zulus, or South Sea Islanders, he is a potential student of history, which is rooted in anthropology. Has "G. M." ever tried to tell a boy the story of Primitive Man? And has he done so with the necessary, or at any rate highly desirable, apparatus of drawings, photographs, models, &c.? I repeat here, what I have hinted in another place, that one of the defects of our present system is a dread of apparatus. It is true that apparatus is no substitute for good teaching, and that the effective employment of it demands a special order of skill; but the skilled teacher may assuredly make of it an invaluable accessory.[1]

[1] It is only fair to quote on the other side the experience of teachers associated with the Parents' National Educational Union, as set forth in the "Manifesto" of that

It may be said that even the Red Indian will lose all his attraction for boyhood when he enters the schoolroom otherwise than surreptitiously. I reply that this is the objection of a critic who cannot look beyond the present order of things, with its hard-and-fast barrier between "work" and "play." Froebel broke down that barrier in the kindergarten: it ought now to be, if not broken down, at all events freely perforated, along the whole course of scholastic life. It is all a question of skilled teaching. The master who has no imaginative sympathy may make even the Red Indian abhorrent; not so the man to whom the saga

body: "That we may not paralyse the mental vigour of "children, we are very chary in the use of appliances "(except such as the microscope, telescope, magic lantern, "&c.). The power in the teacher of illustrating by inkpot "and ruler or any object at hand, or by a few lines on the "blackboard, appears to me to be of more use than the "most elaborate equipment of models and diagrams. "These things stale on the senses, and produce a torpor "of thought the moment they are presented." These remarks bear out what my own experience has suggested—that the school museum or arsenal of appliances should be kept jealously closed, and objects drawn from it only when required for purposes of actual demonstration. They certainly should not be allowed to "stale on the senses" by becoming familiar to uncomprehending eyes.

of humanity is living, and who realises how it is working itself out in little in the minds of his pupils.

Let me give, in parenthesis, an example of what I conceive to be the proper use of apparatus. There ought to be in every school museum a set of models of the typical boats and ships used, now or formerly, by savage and barbarous races—the coracle, the kayak, the sampan, the proa, the great war canoes of the South Sea Islands or the African rivers, right up to the trireme, the junk, and the viking-ship of our ancestors. One or two of these models ought to be constructed in parts, so that they can be taken to pieces and put together again. For instance, there should be a perfect model, not too small, of that wonderful achievement of the indomitable spirit of man, the Eskimo kayak, with its appurtenances of harpoon, throwing-stick, &c. It would afford a tangible text for an exposition of the life of squalid heroism to which it ministers. The Eskimo, putting forth alone on the great waters, and doing battle in his egg-shell pinnace with the walrus and the whale, should be contrasted with the Kanaka plying one of the fifty paddles of a huge dug-

out, and the Phœnician galley-slave toiling under the driver's lash. Thus these toys, so fascinating to every normal boy, might serve as keys to various typical phases of human development. The influence of climatic and physiographic environment on the forms of primitive polity would be illustrated, and the confused notions which a boy so eagerly absorbs as to savage manners and customs would be co-ordinated into an outline-sketch, true and illuminating so far as it went, of some of the most important data in the history of civilisation. More detailed knowledge, subsequently acquired, would fit into the scheme of just primary conceptions, and would be the more easily mastered and retained. At a later stage, a study of the secular evolution of the battleship and the ocean-greyhound should accompany a sketch of that process of expansion which has been one of the leading factors in modern history. And I take boats and ships, of course, only as affording a particularly obvious example of the way in which models and graphic apparatus might be made to subserve the purposes of the history-teacher.

To return, now, to "G. M.'s" exposition of difficulties. "When once you come to an

end of the simple stories," he says, "you find that most of the things you have to talk about in history are utterly beyond a young boy's experience or understanding." Well — but when do you "come to an end of the simple stories"? In my conception, this is no such easy matter. It seems to me that before we are at the end of the simple stories the young boy would no longer be so very young, but ought to be pretty nearly ripe for the consideration of "the taxes, the Constitution, the rights of Parliament, and the freedom of the Press." "The simple stories!" I am sure the suggestion of scorn in "G. M.'s" phrase does injustice to his thought. He does not really mean to make light of the educative value of character and drama in history. That is one of the narrownesses which detract from the value of Herbert Spencer's treatise on education. He says much that is true of history as ordinarily taught; but to make history, for educational purposes, synonymous with sociology is as great a mistake as to let it deal only with "Court intrigues, plots, usurpations, or the like." The Spencer-Buckle theory of historic science, with its elimination of the individual

and the event, should doubtless be expounded to the schoolboy at a certain stage of his progress, but should by no means form the basis of school teaching. "G. M.," I am very sure, does not mean that it should. He well knows the value of "the simple stories"—aye, even of the legends and fables—as part of the imaginative and moral heritage of the race.

"The simple stories!" There is a mine of suggestion in the phrase. The graduation of the simple stories so as to suit all stages of development from seven to fifteen, is clearly one of the tasks of the scientific teacher of history—that, and the telling of them in such a context as shall place them in their just relation to the saga of humanity. In my conception, all heroic legend is a part of history—Theseus, the Argonauts, Romulus and Remus, Arthur and Roland, Alfred and the cakes, Canute and the waves, Bruce and the spider—everything on which the imagination of man has dwelt, or round which his emotions have centred. Of course legend should from the first be discriminated from fact, and the rudiments of historical criticism thus suggested ought to have high educative value. But,

legend apart, there is ample material in the great characters, and the picturesque and heroic events, that stud the annals of the nations, to keep a boy profitably occupied until he is ripe for constitutional, political, and economic history.

The annals of the nations, I say, not of Britain alone, nor even of Britain, Greece, and Rome. It is of the utmost importance that the great figures who people the past of our neighbours and rivals in the modern world should be real, and sympathetic or sinister as the case may be, to the imagination of the English boy. To take the most obvious instances, is there any possible reason why he should not, at a very early age, make the acquaintance of Francis of Assisi and Joan of Arc? Or is the simple story of these simple folk beneath the dignity of historic teaching? Then there are the strange remote romances of history to be dealt with—the stories of Mexico, Peru, India, Japan. What a fascinating and profoundly instructive series of lessons might not a skilled teacher educe from the Icelandic sagas! I believe that, at a certain stage, a very valuable exercise might be found in the reading and criticism of

historic romance; a comparison of the character and environment of the real Richard I. and Louis XI. with their character and environment as portrayed in *Ivanhoe* and *Quentin Durward;* a study of the element of history in *The Three Musketeers* or *Esmond* or *The Cloister and the Hearth.*

But different teachers would employ different processes, alike only in their careful adaptation to the age and capacity of the pupil. The simple stories would be told at first as stories pure and simple; but little by little they would be more carefully placed in their historic context; little by little their sociological import would be more fully expounded, and particular facts would be grouped in the light of general principles. I can scarcely doubt that boys of average intelligence would have made considerable progress in what even "G. M." would recognise as specifically historical knowledge by the time they reached the age of fifteen. But supposing I am wrong; supposing that up to that age they were still occupied with the simple stories in all their simplicity; would not their time have been better employed than in burdening their memories with the inert and irrelevant matter

to which so many of their best hours are at present devoted? How I wish that the simple stories had been skilfully placed before me in the years when my imagination was alert and my memory retentive!

It is interesting to note that "G. M.'s" scepticism as to the possibility of teaching history to the young is not shared by so high an authority on all such topics as Sir Joshua Fitch. In the first paper of his *Educational Aims and Methods* (1900), dealing with "Methods of Instruction as Illustrated by the Bible," he dwells upon "the use made by the sacred writers of biography as ancillary to history." "The historical portions of the Old and New Testaments," he says, "consist rather of a series of biographies than of a connected chronological narrative of events":

"Held in solution (he continues) in the "biographies [of Moses, Samuel, David, &c.] "are not only facts about the national history, "but illustrations of human character and duty, "and the principles of the Divine government. "These illustrations are all the more impres-"sive when thus presented in the concrete, as "part of the story of lives in which we are

"interested, and in which are to be seen
"records of failures and successes, of great
"faults and great virtues, 'the glory and the
"littleness of man.' If we look into our own
"experience, we shall be reminded that we
"did not first of all feel an interest in historical
"events and afterwards inquire who the people
"were who had a hand in them. What hap-
"pened was this—we were first attracted to
"some great person's character or deeds of
"heroism, and having once felt interested in him
"we began to care about the events in which
"he took a part. The practice now adopted
"in the public elementary schools of England
"corresponds to this experience. Children in
"the lower classes are not asked to read con-
"nected narratives of events beginning and
"proceeding by regular sequence from the
"Ancient Britons to the age of Victoria. But
"their earliest lessons in history are anecdotal
"and biographical, and are associated with the
"most dramatic incidents in the annals of
"England, and the personal characteristics
"and adventures of the leading actors.
"Herein the course of instruction prescribed
"by authority in our primary schools, and
"adopted so largely by good teachers else-

"where, follows the precedent set by the
"Bible historians; for it presents to the
"learner a series of biographical sketches as
"the chief links in the chain of historical
"testimony, connected with the more con-
"spicuous national events; and it assumes
"that future and more systematic knowledge
"will, as it is acquired, fit itself readily into
"the intervening spaces."[1]

This passage puts in more accomplished form a great deal of what I have been trying to say above. It proves, at any rate, that the writer sees no impossibility in bringing home to young children an aspect of history which, though despised by the pundits, is assuredly an invaluable stimulus to the imagination and the moral sympathies.

Following up the hint here given by Sir Joshua Fitch, I would suggest a threefold gradation in the presentment of history to the youthful mind. The learner should be invited to interest himself in (1) personalities, (2) events, (3) principles; or (to re-word the same series) in character, drama, and science. Thus the personality of Nelson, illustrated by the classic anecdotes (not without criticism), and by

[1] Appendix D, p. 217.

the briefest outline of his career, should be first introduced to the child; a few years later his campaigns might be sketched, and the tactics of the Nile and Trafalgar set forth in some little detail; while a few years later, again, it would be time enough to study the general influence of sea-power upon history, as illustrated in the great strategic struggle of Pitt against Napoleon.

In sum, then, "G. M.'s" discouraging experience of the teaching of history in nowise depresses me. At worst it may be taken as showing that what I have called the up-stream study of history—the exposition of the ways in which history touches the boy's daily life, "how it has moulded the form of government under which he lives, and imposed on him the privileges and duties of citizenship"—ought to begin at a somewhat later period than I had vaguely indicated.

The historians who would altogether exclude history from schools, or admit it only in the upper forms, reason, I believe, to this effect: A young boy cannot possibly understand the real, essential facts about (say) such a personage as Alfred the Great. In reading about him, he

gets into his head a few prejudices, a few anecdotes (mainly fabulous), and an entirely false mental picture of the man and the world he lived in—since his experience affords him no material for the composition of a truer one. Thus, when the time comes for the implanting of valid knowledge, the soil is found to be already occupied by a thick growth of vain opinion and fantasy, which must be laboriously weeded out, and will probably never be altogether extirpated.

To this it seems to me that several answers are possible. In the first place, even the established popular misconceptions of history ought to be known. They are part of the national mythology, and not to know them is to be ignorant of one of the elements, and not the least potent, that have gone to the making of the national consciousness. Secondly, it does not seem that, in the order of facts with which history deals, there is any particular difficulty in replacing an erroneous by a valid conception. The new idea, superimposed on the old, will often be the more clearly realised and the better retained. Thirdly, it is almost inconceivable that even a quite young child should be wholly unable to grasp any sort of historic

truth. That a great deal of what passes as history-teaching is ill-informed and injudicious, one very readily admits; but this only means that, as aforesaid, the science of history-teaching is not yet developed, or, at any rate, not yet generally understood.

On this subject the writer of *The Upton Letters* has what I take to be a quite admirable passage. He says (p. 256):—

"I find it hard to resist the conviction that, "from the educational point of view, stimulus "is more important that exactness. It is more "important that a boy should take a side, "should admire and abhor, than that he "should have very good reasons for doing "so. For it is character and imagination that "we want to affect rather than the mastery of "minute points and subtleties.

"Thus, from an educational point of view, I "should consider that Froude was a better "writer than Freeman; just as I should "consider it more important that a boy should "care for Virgil than that he should be sure "that he had the best text.

"I think that what I feel to be the most "desirable thing of all is, that boys should "learn somehow to care for history—however

"prejudiced a view they take of it—when they
"are young; and that when they are older,
"they should correct misapprehensions, and
"try to arrive at a more complete and just
"view."

VII

ENTER THE CLASSICS

BEFORE proceeding to the main subject of this chapter, I had better try to answer the objection suggested at the end of Chapter IV.: to wit that, supposing my ideal could be realised, education, in its earlier stages at any rate, would be "all play and no work," and consequently devoid of disciplinary value.

It is true, of course, that, for the development of his character, if for no other reason, a boy must learn to work against the grain as well as with it. Even if it were possible to learn things adequately without effort, or with only pleasurable effort, it would certainly not be desirable. A due proportion of drudgery is an essential element in education. On this point Dr. Busby himself could not be more emphatic than I.

But Providence has conveniently ordained that nothing worth knowing can be competently known without a fair amount of drudgery. There is no difficulty whatever in introducing that necessary element into any educational system. The points to be kept in mind are, I think, three : (1) That the drudgery should bear only a healthy proportion to the pleasurable side of study ; (2) That it should never be, or even seem to the pupil, irrelevant, arbitrary, or wantonly imposed ; (3) That nothing that can be made interesting should, by mechanical and unintelligent teaching, be allowed to seem "dry." Even in the most fascinating subject there are plenty of details which *must* be laboriously acquired. To make difficult what is easy is merely to retard the conquest of inevitable difficulties.

My suggestion is that in every boy's time-table a certain proportion of hours—approximately one-third of the whole "lesson-time"—should be deliberately set apart for drudgery. Suppose he does seven hours' work in the day—five and a half in school, one and a half of private preparation. In that case his preparation-time should be devoted to

memorising formulas and classifications, names, dates, sequences of events, grammatical rules, and other details ; to construing and composing in foreign tongues ; to writing essays in his own tongue ; and to other tasks demanding concentrated mental effort — always brought into clear relation to the studies which he should be pursuing pleasurably at school. Then one, or at most one and a half, of the hours in school, should be given up to repetition, and other methods of testing the work done in private. Thereafter it should be the masters' business to see that the remaining school-hours were distinctly pleasant to every intelligent and well-disposed boy—that his observation, his reasoning-powers, and his imagination were agreeably exercised on subjects that had been made real and living to him.[1] If there were any necessary subject (say, for example, mathematics) to which a boy displayed a constitutional antipathy, allowance should be made for that fact, and, while he should by no means escape it altogether, it should not figure so largely in his time-table as to impose upon him, week by week, an undue proportion of drudgery. But I strongly suspect that most "constitutional

[1] Appendix E, p. 220.

antipathies" would quickly yield to really intelligent teaching.[1]

There ought to come a time, of course, even before a boy leaves school, when this distinction between drudgery and pleasurable work would at some points disappear—when certain subjects should have taken such hold upon his mind that the most arduous labour bestowed upon them should be to him a pleasure. But the average boy does not quickly arrive at this point, and in my view it is scarcely desirable that he should. If he has the time and the means requisite for a liberal education, he should not specialise too early. Let him have a broad general vision of the wonders of his dwelling-place and the glories and miseries of his kind, before he concentrates either on his "bread-study," or on the main intellectual interest of his life.

The reader has probably noted that among the subjects of "drudgery" above enumerated,

[1] To any one who would realise the profound stupidity of much that goes by the name of mathematical education, as well as the possibility of better things, I earnestly recommend the two little books by Mrs. M. E. Boole mentioned in the Introduction, p. 12.

I include the memorising of grammatical rules, and construing and composing in foreign tongues. This is the first sign, he may have remarked, that the acquisition of languages finds any place in my scheme. "Here," I can fancy him saying, "we come to the crux of the matter. With your Science on this side and your History on that, Language would seem to be between the devil and the deep sea. Where do you propose to wedge it in?"

My answer is that I do not propose to wedge it in at all, but to approach it through, and as a part of, history. For French I would make an exception. Wherever it is at all possible, the child should begin to pick up French before, or soon after, the alphabet. It should be a kindergarten subject—should come to him almost in play. At any rate, he might very well know something of it before the age of seven, which would, I take it, be about the normal age at which serious and sequent education should begin. But this is merely to say that advantage should if possible be taken of that faculty in children which makes them quite readily bilingual. Special circumstances, of course, might place a child in the way of picking up German or Italian instead

of French. But where there is any choice, French should, on all accounts, be the second tongue.

Apart from this, I would teach no language until history, so to speak, brought the boy face to face with it—and that in two ways. In working down-stream through history he would soon wish to know something of the languages in which the Greeks and Romans spoke and sang; in working up-stream, he would have to trace the constituents of his own language back to Germany and Normandy, to Rome and Athens.

As Greek has borne a comparatively small part in the building-up of English, I would, during the first survey of Hellenic history, bid the learner curb his longing to commune in their own idiom with Herodotus and Thucydides. He should pick up the Greek alphabet; he should become familiar with mythological, historical and geographical names in their original forms; he should of course learn the meaning of those frequently recurring terms which have no exact equivalent in English; he should perhaps be taught to construe and memorise a few brief passages of prose and verse, that he may have the sonority of the

language in his ears. This would be an aid to imagination; and the awakening of the imagination is here, as ever, the main point. I will even go further—though the suggestion may seem preposterous—and say that the pupil might be taught to read one or two short and clear inscriptions, photographically reproduced. Nothing brings the past more vitally before us than to see its actual records, not through the cold interposition of modern type, but as they were incised by men to whom the fact was present and the language alive. But on such details I do not pretend to dogmatise. Different masters might employ different methods—"and every single one of them be right." The essential point is to note that any serious instruction in Greek, at the point where the Romance of Hellas is first encountered in the downward historical course, would be premature and disproportionate.

It is otherwise when we come to Rome. Latin, as the mother-language of Italian, French, and Spanish, and the beneficent stepmother (shall we say?) of English, is a necessary element in a liberal education. It is of the utmost importance that every boy should possess a considerable Latin vocabu-

lary, a feeling for the precise values of the words composing it, and some acquaintance with the syntax of the language. Therefore, as soon as the pupil's interest in Roman history was thoroughly aroused, I would suffer him to make acquaintance with some of its sources. After—not before—he had mastered, with every illustrative adjunct, the general outline of Cæsar's campaigns in Gaul, he should read, in Cæsar's own words, the story of his victories over the Helvetii and the Nervii, of the siege of Alesia and of the descent upon Britain. After—not before—the tragedy of Catiline had been brought home to his imagination, he should read some of the picturesque passages in Sallust and in Cicero's invectives. In illustration of earlier periods, pages of Livy would come in here and there; and in due time he might be guided through some of the close-packed sentences of Tacitus. But his reading should, at this point, be entirely subsidiary and illustrative to his historical course. No attempt should be made to plough through a whole book. He should read only extracts, but extracts of which he already possessed the historical context. He should have learnt no more than the bare rudiments of grammar,

should do no more composition than such simple exercises as form the readiest method of enabling the learner, in reading, to pick up the thread of a construction. All difficulties, beyond a certain very moderate standard, should be smoothed away in notes. The aim, in short, should be to give the boy—by this time, perhaps, ten or eleven years old—a considerable Latin vocabulary, while throwing a strong light on certain salient points in Roman history by enabling him to read of them in the original documents.

How different was the course pursued in my time, and in some measure, I fancy, to the present day! My first Latin reading-book, I remember, was Cæsar *De Bello Gallico*, Lib. I. I had heard vaguely of Julius Cæsar as the first Roman who crossed the Channel, and found the Ancient Britons tastefully decorated with woad. Of his place in the history of Rome and of the world I knew nothing. What he was doing in Gaul was a mystery far beyond my ken. I laboriously construed his narrative at the rate of some fifteen lines a day, so that it had no continuity, no movement, no spark of interest for me. If any one had told me that it was in fact a most exciting

story, how I should have stared! But no one challenged my incredulity with such a paradox. I plodded apathetically onward, little dreaming that the tedious old gentleman with his ablative absolutes was not only one of the greatest but one of the most romantic characters the world had ever seen. Not many beginners, I dare say, are now left quite so much in the dark; but when, by chance, I read the introduction to a school classic, I cannot wonder that the boys for whom it is intended should, as a rule, prefer to skip it, and should cherish the tradition that history is "dull."

"But is your schoolboy to have no knowledge of Latin literature, save in brief snippets from the historians and orators?" With the place and function of literature in education I shall deal in the next chapter. Here let me only remind the reader that so far I have not brought our schoolboy beyond the age of thirteen at the utmost. I have conceived his time, from seven to thirteen, as divided between Science and History, both placed before him with the constant endeavour to awaken his imagination, to stimulate his faculties of wonder and awe, and to make him realise that the world is no tedious or humdrum place of

sojourn, but a treasure-house of absorbing interests, which he could not possibly exhaust were his life protracted to the span of Methusaleh. About thirteen, he should reach, I take it, the parting of the ways, and decide which of the two lines of study is to engage the greater share of his energies. If he decide for history, he also decides for its "breath and finer spirit"—literature.

VIII

THE FETISH OF GRAMMAR

SOMEWHERE between twelve and fourteen, then, a boy would make choice of his career, or at any rate of his main interest in life. If he proposed to become a doctor or engineer (civil or military) or artilleryman or manufacturer or chemist or sailor, he would give more time to science and less to history. He would renounce altogether the idea of learning Greek. Whether he went so far into Roman history as to read the chief Latin classics in the original might depend on individual taste and facility—for some boys, unless I am greatly mistaken, have a knack of reading Latin with ease, which is denied to others of equal intelligence. If he "kept up his Latin" at all he would read rapidly, with a view to literary and historical,

not linguistic, profit. Mediæval history he would be content to take in broad outline. By far the greater part of the time abstracted from science should be given to the history of his own country (which he would find inextricably interwoven with that of France and America) and to the history of his own language. The latter study would involve the knowledge of some Teutonic dialect ; so that at this point the necessities both of his historical and of his scientific reading would impose upon him the acquisition of German. "And literature? Where does that come in?" Have I not said that, apart from science, his chief study should be the history of his own country? And who can know aught worth knowing of English history who does not take English literature along with it?

If, on the other hand, he proposed to seek his career in the law, or the Church, or the less scientific branches of soldiering, in politics, art, journalism, or the civil service, he would slack-off on the side of science (though certainly without abandoning it)[1] and devote himself

[1] "Intellectual culture, at the end of the nineteenth century, must include as its most essential element a scientific habit of mind; and a scientific habit of mind

mainly to history. For him, too, no doubt, the history (always including the literature and language) of his own country would be the most imperative of interests; but he would also be able to go back upon ancient and mediæval history, looking beneath its merely picturesque and romantic aspects, and studying its philosophical and sociological import. I suggest, without insistence, that the usual aim should be for the student to know "something of everything and everything of something." That is to say, he should have in his mind an outline map of the whole field, while he should make a special and minute survey of one of two provinces.

We are now, at last, face to face with the question of what is known as a "classical education." When a boy has determined that his special interest does not lie in the direction of science, ought he, as a rule, to go through anything like the course of study which now prevails on the "classical side" of our public schools? Quite distinctly my answer is, "As a rule—no!" Some boys, no doubt, may

can only be acquired by the methodical study of some part, at least, of what the human race has come scientifically to know."—Henry Sidgwick.

develop a special aptitude and desire for classical scholarship, in the special sense in which we now understand it. By all means, in that case, let them follow their bent. But the idea that classical scholarship has a unique and miraculous educative value, which renders it indispensable to the truly accomplished human being, is, in my view, a superstition which must presently go by the board.

In trying to think the matter out, let us, at risk of some repetition, go back to first principles. The root principle from which this whole argument springs—if the reader denies it, we have no common standing-ground—is that each of us is placed, for a brief span of years, in a universe of marvels all compact, and that the highest meaning and value of life lie in the investigation, admiration, and worship of as much of this unfathomable miracle as our limitations of time and faculty will permit us to apprehend. So much granted, it follows that the essential task of education must be to cultivate in the youthful mind the power of vivid and reverent realisation of the external and internal universe. To this end a gymnastic of the intellectual powers is doubtless required; but I have

argued (and surely there can be no rational doubt on the point) that it is quite unnecessary to go out of our way in search of such a gymnastic—that it comes in the natural and inevitable course of serious application to any reasonably comprehensive group of studies. That morals, too, fall within the sphere of education is not for a moment denied; but I shall try to show, in another chapter, that they can be much more effectively promoted through, than apart from, the religion of the intellect which it ought to be the primary aim of education to instil.[1]

Time, then, is short, and the wonders of the universe inexhaustible. It follows (does it not?) that we must distribute our little allotment of time to the best possible advantage for the exploration, both extensive and intensive, of this wonderland in which we are placed. We cannot afford to waste a moment of work-time (reasonable recreation-time is not wasted) on anything that does not contribute, or contributes only in a negligible degree, to our appreciation of the marvellous dealings of the all-efficient Power in nature and in the soul of man.

[1] Appendix F, p. 230.

Now a great part of our current classical training is, from this point of view, perhaps the idlest of mental exercises. And why? Because it is concerned with accidents and conventions, not with inherent properties or necessary sequences.[1] The grammar of a language, considered as an isolated fact, and not as a term in a process, is a thing of small intrinsic significance. It is simply the code of correspondences which happens to be dominant at a particular period—a mechanism for quickly and accurately establishing the relations of the words employed in formulating and communicating ideas. Thus regarded, it has a certain logical interest, and is subject to logical criticism; but until we study it comparatively and historically (or, in one word, psychologically) it seems, and cannot but seem, far more arbitrary than rational. Now, even with all the time expended on classics in public-school and university education, the scientific, the psychological aspect of grammar is not, and cannot be, brought home to one learner in a hundred. It is a matter for special and very advanced study. To the most intelligent schoolboy, the grammar of the classical lan-

[1] Appendix G, p. 234.

guages remains a congeries of fortuitous forms, regular and irregular, and of rules which, for the most part, seem to him purely conventional. A certain acquaintance with these forms and rules is necessary if he is to read Greek or Latin with accuracy of comprehension ; but it should be the aim of the teacher to spend as little time as possible on the inert and seemingly arbitrary mechanism, and in every way to facilitate the pupil's access to the spiritual content of the language he is studying. Yet, in practice, what occurs? The pupil is made to acquire (or attempt to acquire) not the modicum of grammar which would enable him to read the language with understanding, but such a minute acquaintance with every trumpery grammatical usage of a given period as shall enable him to write something more or less like the Greek or Latin of a particular author or group of authors! It is not pretended that he can express his thoughts more vividly or comprehensibly in these languages than in his own, or in some other modern tongue that could be mastered with a fifth part of the labour. Once, indeed, Latin was the universal medium of communication throughout the educated world ; but it is centuries since

this ceased to be the case. At present the pupil is seldom or never called upon to express any thought of his own in either Latin or Greek. He spends hour upon hour through year upon year in translating into the classical languages the thoughts of other people—selected, not for their intrinsic value, but for their comparative ease or difficulty of translation. Half of this time, or more, is given to composition in verse!—such verse as would certainly (except in an infinitesimal minority of cases) make Sophocles and Virgil writhe in their respective sepulchres. Could any practice be, on the face of it, more insensate? If we could attain a detached point of view, and shake off the blinkers of habit, would it not seem merely unbelievable?

We shall come presently to the arguments by which this remarkable habit is defended. Meanwhile I must allude to another point in which our current classical education is, as I said above, concerned with accidents and conventions. Not only the grammar, but the vocabulary, of a particular period—nay, of one or two arbitrarily-selected authors—must be sedulously studied and exclusively cultivated. It is sheer barbarism to treat Latin as a live

thing, to make use of all its riches, to try to enlarge its capabilities. We must assume that it stopped short with Cicero, or at latest with Tacitus, and expend untold study and pains on keeping it unimpeachably dead. Now I fully admit that this limitation, or at any rate some limitation, is quite necessary. We cannot treat Latin as a live language, for the principle of healthy growth, through the natural selection of new words and forms, went out of it once for all when it ceased to be one of the mediums in which men instinctively embodied their thoughts. If we must write it at all, we must write it to a certain standard; else we should soon produce a sort of pidgin-Latin, worse than the dog-Latin of the Middle Ages, inasmuch as there would be no sort of use or excuse for it. The writing of Latin, in fact, is an "elegant accomplishment," or it is nothing. But to say this is surely to reduce it to absurdity; for the few who ever attain accomplishment do so at the cost of a grotesquely disproportionate expenditure of time, while the many toil after it with infinite groaning and tribulation of spirit, and never attain it at all.

The study of the particular limitations of a given author's vocabulary has no more—nay, it

has less—essential reason in it than the study of a particular set of grammatical usages. As a body of documents bearing on the political and intellectual adventures of the human spirit, the writings of Cicero are of inestimable value. It is of some importance, too, that we should read them in the original, since our imaginative realisation of his period is thereby intensified. Moreover, the qualities of his rhetoric are worthy of study—his methods of exposition, argument, invective, and appeal. They are full of artistic interest and instruction. It may even be a valuable exercise for the student to imitate them—in his own language. But the peculiarities of Cicero's vocabulary and syntax are of no moment whatever. They are absolutely fortuitous—that is to say, they depend on psychological conditions which defy analysis. The fact that such and such a word had gone out of use in Cicero's time, or not yet come into use, or, though in currency, happened not to be employed by him, is just about as insignificant, in relation to the order of the universe, as anything well can be. It would be important if we wished to make ourselves agreeably comprehensible in conversation with Cicero himself or one of his educated contemporaries; but as

there is no likelihood of such an opportunity presenting itself, I venture to maintain that to spend hundreds of hours of our priceless youth in learning to avoid locutions unsanctioned by Cicero is a cruel and almost impious waste of time and mental energy.[1]

It is extremely difficult to express one's thought on this matter briefly, clearly, and without apparent over-emphasis. I am aware that some of the things I have said in this paper will appear excessive even to people who are not bigoted partisans of the established classical curriculum. Perhaps in examining the pleas usually put forward in its favour, I may succeed in defining my position more accurately, if not more acceptably.

[1] "G. M." writes: "A good composition teacher does not—as 'Kappa' implies—say mechanically, 'This word does not occur in Cicero; you are to imitate Cicero; therefore, this word is wrong.' He merely sees that, roughly speaking, the style in a piece of composition is uniform throughout; that, to take a parallel, if you begin writing an essay in the style of Addison and introduce into it a phrase out of Carlyle, the result is something wrong. This may be a refinement, but it is surely part of the ordinary æsthetics of language."

POSTSCRIPT: ON THE CLAIMS OF GREEK.—A critic to whom I am deeply indebted at many points—"G. M." to wit—discusses as follows the suggestions put forth in the two foregoing chapters:—

"I am not at all satisfied with the public-"school teaching of the classics. I think with "'Kappa' that too many boys learn classics, "that too many hours are spent in teaching "classics, and that they are taught in too "narrow a way. There is too much grammar; "not enough philology; too much Latin, not "enough Greek; too much composition, no "enough translation, not enough history, and "the whole subject treated with too little "literary sense. Some of these points can be "easily remedied. It is easy, for instance, to "reduce the number of boys, and it ought to "be easy to teach the remainder better. But, "as things are at present going, I see some "difficulties ahead. One is that the line of "least resistance, in reducing the time given to "the classics, is to begin by cutting off the best "things and leaving the second-best. There "can be little doubt, for instance, that the most "valuable things in ancient literature are "Greek poetry and Greek philosophy. Yet

"even so sympathetic a critic as 'Kappa' is "going largely to drop these, and give us "instead a wide and fluent reading of Cicero "and Livy and the Scriptores Historiae "Augustae! This must somehow be wrong.

"I do not see my way out of the difficulty, "but one fact to be remembered is this: In "former centuries, as 'Kappa' says, people "learned Latin because it was the general and "polite language. This reason has ceased to "operate. But why did they learn Greek? "Not for that reason, nor mainly for any "reason that has ceased to operate, but for "exactly the same motives as ourselves—be-"cause of the exceptional value and beauty of "Greek thought and Greek literature. I would "not say a word in favour of 'compulsory "Greek,' yet one cannot help wondering "whether the line of abandoning the best "things first can really be the wisest way of "reforming classical education."

The remark about "Cicero, Livy, and the Scriptores Historiae Augustae" is apparently founded on a misunderstanding. When I spoke of a boy going "so far into Roman history as to read the chief Latin classics in the original," I was not thinking only of the

historical classics, but was using the word "history" in the wider sense which it is one of my primary objects to claim for it. The works of Lucretius and Catullus, Virgil and Horace, are in my eyes documents in Roman history, just as clearly as Livy or Suetonius.

I confess myself much impressed by "G.M.'s" suggestion as to the unwisdom of "cutting off the best things and leaving the second-best." Latin, of course, cannot be deprived of its historical position as the mother or step-mother of so many modern tongues, and our own among the number. Therefore it would be unreasonable to postpone it entirely to Greek. It must be the basis of linguistic study. But I am quite willing to believe that even for the boy who intends to make science rather than history the basis of his life-work—for the boy contemplated in the opening sentences of Chapter VIII.—it might in some cases be advisable to drop Latin altogether at the age of thirteen or so, and take up Greek instead. Experience has proved, I believe, that Greek can be learnt quickly and efficiently by boys who begin it at this comparatively late age. Of course it would only be a boy with strong literary tastes who would find it worth while to

learn a language for the sake of purely literary enjoyment; but it does not seem to me at all inconceivable that, under a reformed system, a good many boys would be moved, at this point in their progress, deliberately to face the extra labour and prefer the best to the second-best.

In *The Upton Letters* there occurs a passage which, though not directly germane to this point, shows that the writer would approve the idea of taking up a classical language at a comparatively late age, and for literary, as distinct from linguistic purposes. "My own "belief," he says, "is that Greek and Latin are "things to be led up to, not begun with; that "they are hard, high literatures, which require "an initiation to comprehend; and that one "ought to go backwards in education, begin-"ning with what one knows.

"It seems to me, to use a similitude, that "the case is thus. If one lives in a plain and "wishes to reach a point upon a hill, one must "make a road from the plain upwards. It will "be a road at the base, it will be a track higher "up, and a path at last, used only by those "who have business there. But the classical "theorists seem to me to make an elaborate

"section of macadamised road high in the "hills, and, having made it, to say that the "people who like can make their own road "in between."

Surely a pregnant and memorable image!

IX

VERBAL CHESS-PLAYING

THE apologists of the predominant part played by prose and verse composition in the ordinary classical curriculum usually rely upon two main arguments: (1) that the act of translating into Latin and Greek is an incomparable training for the intellectual, and especially the literary, faculties; (2) that it is the only way to attain a thorough mastery of these languages, and a full appreciation of the peculiar qualities of classical literature.[1]

The latter plea, even if just in itself, is of

[1] "And yet this preposterous system continues year after year. I had an animated argument with some of the best of my colleagues the other day about it. I cannot tell you how profoundly irritating these wiseacres were. They said all the stock things—that one must lay a foundation, and that it could only be laid by using the best literatures; that Latin was essential because it lay at the root of so many other languages; and Greek, because

very limited value, since it is certain that only a small minority of the boys who spend the best hours of their best years over Greek and Latin composition ever do attain a wide knowledge or a keen appreciation of classical literature. The majority must profit in other ways, if they profit at all; so that the former plea—the unrivalled intellectual gymnastic supplied by prose and verse composition—must form the decisive line of defence. My answer to it has already been clearly foreshadowed; but I will now state it in greater detail.

Certainly no mental exercise involving memory, resourcefulness, and alertness of attention is ever entirely wasted. The solving of charades, or the writing of acrostics, has its value. A game of chess is a most invigorating mental exercise—for me, personally, it is much too severe.[1] Now in Latin and Greek

there the human intellect had reached its high-water mark—'and it has such a noble grammar,' one enthusiastic Grecian said; that an active-minded person could do all the rest himself. It was in vain to urge that in many cases the whole foundation was insecure; and that all desire to raise a superstructure was eliminated."—*The Upton Letters*, p. 158.

[1] It seems to me that, in this age of "compulsory games," a certain amount of chess might very well be made

composition there is something of the athletic virtue of a game of chess. Each sentence is a problem to be solved with such-and-such pieces, which can move only under such-and-such conditions. It is a game in which, instead of seven pieces, there are many thousands, each with its particular, and mainly arbitrary, "moves." Therefore composition is, what chess is not, a gymnastic of memory as well as of attention and power of combination. The learner has to "get by heart" innumerable details to which reason affords not the slightest guide—quantities, irregularities and deficiencies of grammatical form, the occurrence or non-occurrence of such a word in such an author,

compulsory, if only as a test of a particular sort of intellectual capacity. The ability to play a good game of chess may not mean very much; but the congenital inability to do so (from which I, for one, suffer) may be taken, I believe, as a conclusive proof of incapacity for various cognate forms of endeavour. For instance, the boy who cannot become a good chess-player need never dream of being a great general or a good political tactician. As a touchstone of mental quality, in fact, a game of chess seems to me worth more than many an examination.

[A day or two after this note was written, I saw in an illustrated paper a snapshot of a number of German children marching to school, each with his chess-board under his arm.]

&c. Whether the memory really benefits by this gymnastic I will not attempt to determine, but will assume, for argument's sake, that it does. On the whole, then, it would be rash to maintain that composition is sheer and absolute waste of time. It is a form of drudgery that does, in all probability, produce certain valuable effects. If we had eternity before us, there might be no particular harm in this verbal chess-playing.

But education must adapt itself to time, not to eternity.[1] It has but some fifteen years in which to initiate the boy and youth into the glories and mysteries of nature and life; wherefore its guiding principle should be the sternest economy, and most careful apportionment, of time. Everything has to be paid for by drafts on that strictly limited capital; and many things which are good enough in themselves can be bought at an absurdly extravagant rate. Here, assuredly, it is our business to buy in the cheapest, not in the dearest, market; and if we can kill two birds with one stone, or in other words gain two advantages with a given expenditure of time, we are bound to seize them both instead of content-

[1] Appendix H, p. 235.

ing ourselves with one of them alone. Now there can be no possible doubt that, however valuable the mental gymnastic involved in Latin and Greek composition, an equal activity, subtlety and resourcefulness of intelligence can be attained in many other ways. To see this, we have only to look at the Greeks themselves: neither Plato nor Aristotle, in his youth, spent ten hours a week in translating from Greek into (say) Egyptian, or in any exercise in the least analogous. Or, taking the world at large, let us ask how many of its supreme intellects have been trained by this method? I find it hard to think of one. Many Romans, of course, spoke and wrote Greek, as we do French; but that is a totally different matter.[1] Many men of genius wrote in Latin, the Esperanto of the Middle Ages and Renaissance—but that, again, is nothing to the point. If our system of composition were a means towards ultimate self-expression in either Latin or Greek, it would be comparatively rational; but no living soul now uses either language, as Erasmus or Bacon or

[1] I need scarcely remind the reader of Heine's theory that the Romans conquered the world because they did not require to learn Latin.

Spinoza used Latin. They handled it as a necessary tool, not as an elegant accomplishment; nor would it be in the least reasonable to attribute their intellectual greatness in any appreciable degree to their practice in the use of the tool. To put it at a very low estimate, one can easily name ten men of the first intellectual and even literary eminence who never went through anything approaching the classical "grind" of the English public school, for every one who did enjoy the advantage of sharpening his faculties on that fetish-whetstone. We see, then, that "scholarship," in the public-school sense, is, to say the least of it, not indispensable to the complete development of the mental powers; and if there be studies which, while equally valuable as a gymnastic, are also directly contributory to the great end of education—the intimate realisation of the wonders of nature and of the human lot—then it becomes a plain measure of economy to expend our time on securing this dual advantage. A religion of the intellect is the thing to be aimed at; whereas there are few things less calculated to stir our religious emotions than the fortuitous illogicalities of a dead language.

It is positively surprising to note how uncertain is the influence of Greek and Latin composition in promoting even literary, as distinct from intellectual, efficiency.[1] We all know that many excellent scholars have written quite undistinguished and sometimes execrable English; while, on the other hand, many of the masters of our tongue have had, like the master of masters, "small Latin and less Greek." Perhaps the happiest products of classicism, as it reigns in the public schools, were Milton and Tennyson; but did Milton write better verse than Shakespeare, or better prose than Bunyan? Or was the academic Tennyson a greater master of verbal beauty than the druggist's apprentice, Keats? Johnson had gone all through the classical mill; did he write better than Goldsmith, the smatterer, or than Boswell, the fribble? Landor was a profound classic, Thackeray a very superficial one; but which was the greater master of English? Addison's prose was good, but so was Defoe's; Matthew Arnold's was no better than Huxley's; Pater's was very different from Stevenson's, but not intrinsically superior. How many Senior Classics have written better

[1] Appendix I, p. 237.

English than Jane Austen or Charlotte Brontë? What the classical method is most successful in imparting is a sort of suppleness and ingenuity in the manipulation of language, which accounts, I think, for the number and excellence of our writers of elegantly playful verse. It is to our public-school system that we owe Canning and Frere and Praed and Calverley and Locker and Lang and Seaman. No one admires these cunning craftsmen more than I; but I fear we have paid, and are paying, very dear for them.

We come now to the second, and, as I have pointed out, much feebler line of defence—to wit, that only by habitually writing Greek and Latin can we so thoroughly master them as to read them with full appreciation. If this were true, one could only reply that the game was not worth the candle; that the pleasure or advantage was wholly disproportionate to the immense expenditure of time; and that the vast majority even of educated men ought regretfully to recognise that life was too short to admit of their aspiring to "full appreciation" of the classics.

But, as a matter of fact, the plea is untrue, or true only if we lay a quibbling stress on the

word "full."[1] There is a sense in which only the man who has himself practised an art can appreciate, in all its technical subtleties, the work of other artists; but we do not therefore think it necessary to spend years in writing bad blank verse in order "fully" to appreciate Milton. It is perfectly possible to get, if not "full," at any rate ample, enjoyment out of Greek and Latin literature without writing a single line of verse or even of prose. Many men have done so; any man may do so. It is perfectly possible to read any language fluently without a tenth part of the mastery of its minutiae which is required in order to write

[1] One may here appeal to the experience of both Germany and France. In the classical curriculum of neither country does composition hold anything like the place assigned it in England. Verse-writing and Greek prose (so far as I can ascertain) are practically unknown; and what is aimed at in Latin prose is not so much elegance as a certain fluency in original composition. Yet who shall say that the classically-educated German or Frenchman has less appreciation of Greek and Latin literature than the average Englishman who has "gone through the mill"? The result of the neglect of verse is, I understand, that English scholars will sometimes find their Continental colleagues guilty of false quantities; but is an occasional "howler" such a disaster that we ought to spend hundreds or thousands of laborious hours in learning to avoid it?

it correctly. Latin and Greek, no doubt, are more difficult than most modern languages. Passages occur not infrequently in which it needs width and accuracy of scholarship to determine the author's exact meaning—to say nothing of those as to which the best authorities are at odds. But when we come to such a passage, there are plenty of scholars at hand to help us. Why should we be too proud to accept the assistance of a footnote, or even, at need, of a "crib"?

It is scarcely a paradox to maintain that our worship of composition has in great measure stood between us and any practical knowledge of the classics. It has given us a small minority of accurate scholars, an immense majority of men who have read very little Latin and Greek, and that little so slowly, and with such pedantic absorption in grammatical niceties, that its literary and spiritual effect has been entirely lost upon them. If half the hours employed in stringing elegiacs and iambics had been devoted to reading classical authors with every aid, instead of every hindrance, to interest and enjoyment, we should have attained—even then, perhaps, at too great cost—a broad culture in place of a narrow scholarship.

Our present system of classical training is historically a legacy from the Renaissance. But the ideal it now represents belongs not so much to the Renaissance as to the eighteenth century. It is the ideal of cultivated, rationalistic, dilettantism. The type of man whom the system is really fitted to beget is the noble lord or the broad-acred baronet of the Georgian age, who, in some pavilion of his park—imitated from a temple that took his fancy when he made the Grand Tour—would dally, mayhap, with a satire of Horace, or polish the elegant octosyllables of an imitation of Anacreon. But the age of "polite learning" is past. There is no room in the modern world for the eighteenth-century dilettante. His bland heathenism was the result of a comprehensive ignorance of the wonders of nature and life, which was pardonable and partly inevitable in his day, but is a wanton anachronism in ours. Yet our classical system is still essentially directed towards the production of such heathens—most of whom, moreover, fail even to take on the veneer of "polite learning."

Real scholarship is an admirable thing, an indispensable adjunct and contributory to history in the highest sense of the term.

Happy the youth whose tastes and abilities lead him to concentrate on this branch of intellectual service! The fatal mistake lies in making thousands of boys, irrespective of taste or faculty, devote ten or twelve irrecoverable years to the acquisition of a demi-semi-scholarship, which is worth little in itself, and leaves them ignorant, if not contemptuous, of the things which give life its true dignity and import.

In my next chapter I shall try to deal constructively with the due place and function of classical literature in a course of historical study.

Postscript: Composition on its Defence.—As to the value of Latin prose composition, there is such a large consensus among men who are no rabid partisans of the existing system, that I am willing to believe that I have underestimated its actual value as an intellectual training. I have allowed (p. 125) that a certain amount of composition is desirable, simply as the readiest means of attaining facility in reading Latin. Perhaps it would be

wise to increase the very small amount which I had in view. On this point the author of *The Upton Letters* seems to me to write, as he always does, with admirable good sense. He says :—

"Then, too, I would sweep away for all but "boys of special classical ability most kinds of "composition. Fancy teaching a boy side by "side with the elements of German or French "to compose German and French verse, heroic, "Alexandrine, or lyrical! The idea has only "to be stated to show its fatuity. I would "teach boys to write Latin prose, because it "is a tough subject, and it initiates them into "the process of disentangling the real sense of "the English copy. But I would abolish all "Latin verse composition, and all Greek com-"position of every kind for mediocre boys. "Not only would they learn the languages "much faster, but there would be a great deal "of time saved as well. Then I would abolish "the absurd little lessons, with the parsing, "and I would at all hazards push on till they "could read fluently."

"G. M.," on the other hand—a very high authority—puts in an earnest plea for Greek composition :—

"There is one subject of study to which "'Kappa' seems to me to be actually unjust. "I agree with him that too much time is spent "on Greek and Latin composition. Boys and "undergraduates compose too much and read "too little. But 'Kappa' seems to me to "misunderstand the nature of the study when "he speaks of it as 'insensate' or 'concerned "with accidents and conventions.' As a train-"ing of the intellect, I confess I do think the "writing of Latin or Greek prose—I omit "verse for the present—wonderfully effective; "not because it is difficult, but because it "searches the mind. I have just been looking "through a paragraph of 'Kappa's' letter and "thinking how it would translate first into "French, then into Greek. Now it goes into "French practically word for word. It could "be done into French almost by a machine, "certainly by an unintelligent French-speaking "clerk, who did not know what the sentences "really meant. But to get it into Greek, you "must split up all the ideas into their lowest "terms, you must resolve words into things, "and then build them up again into Greek "words. Why? Because, to speak roughly "for the sake of brevity, almost no Greek word

"corresponds exactly with an English word,
"whereas the world and the human nature
"which the Greeks saw and expressed generally
"do correspond with ours. The thing that
"your author means in English can be said in
"Greek, but, first, you must analyse and under-
"stand what he does mean. Then, secondly,
"you must build up the thoughts again in
"another and a particularly beautiful language.
"First comes an exercise of the intellect, then
"one of the æsthetic faculties. Of course, in
"this second stage, there is a large part that
"is purely mechanical or material : the mere
"grind of looking up words in a lexicon, of
"remembering your irregular verbs, and—
"what particularly hurts 'Kappa's' feelings—
"knowing the usage of different authors."

This argument only increases one's regret that it should have been the Romans and not the Greeks—the second-best and not the best people—who civilised Western Europe and laid the foundations of its languages. But regret, though human, is not in this case helpful. Since we cannot unmake the history of the past two thousand years, we must accept the fact that Latin is nearer to us, and subserves more purposes, than Greek, and must

therefore take precedence as an educational medium. This, I think, "G. M." would admit; and this being so, and the days of a man's efficient life being still confined within three-score years and ten, it follows, I greatly fear, that on a reasonable system of proportion in the allotment of time, very few boys (those only, in fact, who intend to make scholarship their profession) ought to indulge in the strenuous luxury of Greek composition. "G. M.'s" criticism touches the accuracy of some of my expressions, and, so far, I accept it without reserve; but it leaves the substance of my argument unaffected. That I underrate the absolute value of composition, whether in Latin or in Greek, is likely enough; but the highest absolute value claimed for it by its champions would have to be multiplied by ten at least in order to justify the proportion of space which it at present occupies in the public-school curriculum.

X

THE CLASSICS IN PERSPECTIVE

WHEN we find a seemingly insensate condition of things prevailing, and ardently defended by otherwise sensible men, it is useless merely to denounce their error—the rational course is to try to understand it. The chances are that the folly of the present will prove to be the wisdom of the past, and that the mistake of its champions lies in their failure to take account of the insensible degrees by which the relations of an idea to its environment have altered. Or, again—to put the same thought somewhat differently—they will be found clinging to a principle just in itself, but cancelled by the greater proportional validity of other principles.

The Humanism of the Renaissance, the fount and origin of our public-school classical

system, was, in its day, a glorious movement of intellectual emancipation.[1] Well may the scholars of St. Paul's revere the memory of "the munificent and pious Colet"! One does not see how, with the given materials, any better system of education could then have been devised. Latin and Greek were the absolutely indispensable means to that very awakening of the imagination which is, in my view, the end of all culture. They were the keys both to history and to science, as they were in those days understood.[2] In the vernacular literatures, the perennial masterpieces were as yet very few; and that historical spirit had not yet come into being which gives new life to the perishable products of a day that is dead. Apart from the classics, in fact, no real culture was possible—or only the culture of scholasticism, from which the classics brought

[1] Appendix K, p. 240.

[2] The Indenture of Feoffment of the Manchester Grammar School sets forth that "the liberal science or "art of grammar is the ground and fountain of all the "other liberal arts or sciences which source and spring "out of the same; without which science the others "cannot perfectly be had, for Science of Grammar is the "Gate by the which all the other hath been learned and "known.'

a blessed escape. In those days, with tolerable diligence, a man might hope to master all the learning of his time that was worth having; and those who stopped short of scholarship had at least (like Shakespeare) acquired some knowledge of the mythology and romance of antiquity, along with an intellectual discipline which was then not otherwise attainable. During the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century, therefore, a liberal education was necessarily and rightly synonymous with a classical education.[1] In the latter half of the seventeenth and in the eighteenth century, it became more and more possible to stimulate the imagination and expand the faculties by other means. The vernacular literatures were rapidly growing, and physical science had

[1] "The ancient 'grammar schools' of England owe "their origin mainly to the Tudor period. . . . During "successive generations, down to the period of the Civil "War, nearly eight hundred 'grammar school' foundations "were created. One uniform purpose is manifest in the "testaments, the deeds of gift and the early statutes by "which the character of these schools was intended to be "shaped. It is to encourage the pursuit of a liberal education "founded on the ancient languages—then the only studies "which had been so far formulated and systematised as "to possess a disciplinal character."—FITCH: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 171.

awakened from its secular slumber.[1] But, though one or two splendid generalisations had been reached, the whole field was too imperfectly explored to admit of any comprehensive interpretation of the universe in terms of science; while the true significance of history was as yet but dimly divined.

Even down to the end of the eighteenth century it was still not unreasonable, not manifestly disproportionate, to treat the ancient languages as the "pons asinorum" of learning—the bridge which all must cross, whatever their ultimate goal. All things considered, it is impossible to say that Addison was wrongly educated, or Johnson, or even Coleridge. We must not quarrel with a system of education because it is not in advance of its time. The principles, or at any rate the methods, for which I am contending were not accessible to the eighteenth century, any more than the airship or the motor-car. We are sometimes apt to fancy it discreditable to our forefathers' intelligence that they did not hit upon many devices which to us appear simple and obvious—that they left the bicycle, for example, to be invented

[1] Appendix L, p. 242.

in our own day. But the reproach is quite unreasonable. All sorts of trifling but indispensable conditions had to concur before the machine became a practical possibility. So, too, with education. It is conditioned by the thousand elements that go to make up the world's self-consciousness. All we can demand of it, at any given period, is that it shall at once express and contribute to the enlightened self-consciousness of the age; and it would be hard to say that, in principle, eighteenth-century education failed to do so. It placed the scholar on a level with the best thought of his age, and left him time to assimilate it; while the aristocratic dilettante, whom it turned out in such numbers, was perhaps as satisfactory an article as could well have been evolved from the material which, in the absence of culture, blossomed into a Lord Foppington, a Sir John Brute, or a Squire Western.

It is impossible to place one's finger on a definite date in the nineteenth century, and declare that at this point the needs and opportunities of the human spirit had so decisively expanded as to render the classical curriculum an anachronism. But it is safe to

say that the point had been reached before the century entered on its fourth quarter. Science had by that time revolutionised the world's self-consciousness; history had taken on a wholly new significance; the planet, both in its physical and its psychological aspects, had become a far larger and more complex phenomenon than it could possibly be to the most advanced intelligence of the eighteenth century. The plot of the world-drama was manifestly thickening in such a way as to impose a new alertness and purposefulness on every man and every nation that aspired to play an effective part in it. The mere accumulation of vital facts in every department of knowledge would have necessitated, had that been all, a redistribution of the learner's time. To take one instance out of a host: was it reasonable that the scheme of education should remain unaltered after such stupendous facts as the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars had been added to the record of humanity? But the facts were not the only, nor even the principal, new element in the case. It was the far-reaching generalisations both of science and of history that rendered imperative a new apportionment

of mental energy, a new economy of the inexpansible years. What matters it that some of the generalisations are provisional, and will have to be amended, or absorbed in larger syntheses? They are none the less essential steps towards the realisation of the world as it is, and the divination of the world as it must be. If these are, as I suggest, the true ends of education, and if, as is quite undeniable, the means towards these ends have multiplied an hundredfold during the past hundred years, then it is evident that a system which may have been the best available for the eighteenth century cannot be the best available for the twentieth.

This is so evident that even the public schools and universities recognise it. Apart from the opportunities which nearly every school offers for specialising either in science or in modern languages, half-hearted attempts are made to smuggle a little science and a little history into the classical curriculum. The result is merely over-pressure and scamping.[1] So long as the bulk of a boy's time is given to minute scholarship and composition, it is quite impossible to teach him anything worth

[1] Appendix M, p. 245.

knowing in the odd half-hours that are left over.

What we require, then, is that the space occupied by the classics in the educational field should be adjusted in a fair ratio to the vast extension of the world's self-consciousness which has taken place during the past century. We need a course of Greek and Latin literature which shall not embrace everything else, but shall itself be embraced in a comprehensive course of historical study. The prime object is to make Hellenic and Roman civilisation real and tangible to the learner—to enable him to live in imagination in those strange and far-off days. Let me not be thought to underrate the importance of this object. Certainly, of all the adventures of humanity, those which took place in the Mediterranean basin between the "Great Migrations" and the overthrow of the Western Empire are the most fascinating, and in many ways the most momentous. How pitiably meagre would be our racial experience if the dawn of all history had coincided with the dawn of modern history, and "the glory that was Greece, the grandeur that was Rome" had either never existed, or had been expunged, by some all-obliterating Ice-Age, from the record

of the planet! Whoever chooses history rather than science as the main interest of his life must assuredly neglect no reasonable means of making his imagination at home in the antique world. What I deny is that, among the reasonable and proportionate means to this end, the microscopic study of the classical languages, and the ability to tag verses in them, can in these days be included. I believe and assert that a living knowledge of Greek and Latin literature could, by a wise economy of effort, be attained in about a fifth of the time which we now devote to attaining a much narrower literary knowledge, coupled with a more or less imperfect linguistic proficiency.

When we get rid of the idea that the difficulty of reading Greek and Latin is a thing to be specially prized for its own sake, as a mental gymnastic, we shall soon see our way to methods of teaching which shall minimise that difficulty. "But why learn the languages at all? Why not be content with translations?" In the case of prose writings which possess no very high artistic value, we should, I think, be content with translations. Where the matter is everything, the manner nothing, it is absurd to waste time in reading slowly what we could with equal

advantage read fast. Even when a prose-writer is distinguished by great artistic beauty or garrulous charm, his style, I suggest, may be studied in more or less extensive specimens, and the bulk of his work read in English. When once we are familiar with a prose-writer's manner, we can feel it, in a good translation, almost as delightfully as in the original. But poetry, we may as well recognise once for all, cannot be translated without the loss of some part of its vital essence. The translation may itself be a beautiful poem, but it is a different poem. Therefore it is essential that whoever would bring his imagination into intimate touch with the imagination of Hellas and of Rome should read in the original the masterpieces of Greek and Latin verse. That this can profitably be done with great rapidity I do not pretend; but when grammar is treated as a means, not as an end, and literature as an end, not as a means, the labour will be immensely diminished and the pleasure proportionately increased.

I suggest, moreover, that nothing should be forced upon the learner for which his intelligence is manifestly unripe. Plato, for example, is to be very carefully handled, if at all, as a

school classic. It is a quite exceptional boy under the age of nineteen who can read the simplest dialogue of Plato without bewilderment; and the bewilderment, in a lad of independent mind, is apt to shade off into antagonism. What is not incomprehensible, he regards as perverse and foolish; and he comes out of the experience in a crudely iconoclastic temper, which is as unjust to Plato as it is undesirable in the interests of his own mental development. A boy should never be required to take wisdom on trust. He should be encouraged to read critically, and not required to read anything to which his powers of criticism are wholly unequal.

To resume: my suggestion is that every boy, by the time he is twelve or thirteen, should have a considerable Latin vocabulary and some knowledge of grammar: that if he make science his main interest, it should depend on individual circumstances whether he carries Latin any farther, and he should only in very rare instances think of approaching Greek[1]: while if history is to be his main interest, he should by all means acquaint himself widely with Latin literature, and, unless special circumstances

[1] But see Postscript to Chapter VIII.

enforce a very strict economy of time, should also learn enough Greek to read the great poets with sympathy and appreciation. I have said nothing of philosophy except to deprecate its too early introduction into the ordinary routine. Both science and history, no doubt, are constantly raising philosophical issues; but it will be time enough for the youth to approach the formal study of philosophy after he has proceeded to the university.

XI

ATHLETICS

IN the course of these chapters I have thrown out several rough definitions of the aim of education, as I understand it. The least inadequate, perhaps, is that which makes it the duty of the educator to beget and foster in his pupil a religion of the intellect. The question — the vital question — now arises: What will be the influence of such a religion on the moral life of the individual? I have hitherto touched on it only in passing, and chiefly with reference to patriotism. Its fuller discussion I reserve for my last chapter; leading up to it in the meantime by some reflections on the absorbing topic of athletics.[1]

The gist of my reflections may be deduced

[1] For some documents on athletics, and their relation to the intellectual life of schools, see Appendix N, p. 246.

from that one epithet—absorbing. In it lies the conclusive criticism upon our educational system. Athletics ought to invigorate, recreate, and delight the healthy boy; they ought not to absorb his thoughts. If they do, it is because his masters have not the will or the skill to awaken his mind to the wonders of the world in which he lives.

My attitude towards athletics, then, may be very shortly and simply defined. I do not grudge the public-school boy one minute of the hours he passes in the playing-fields; I do utterly deplore the fact—the indubitable fact, I fear—that by far the greater part of his leisure moments, when he is neither actually at work nor actually at play, is given up to reading athletic reports, discussing athletic records, and brooding over athletic distinctions either for himself or for his school.

We are told that, if he were not doing this, he would be discussing and brooding over worse things; but what an abject admission of the impotence of our educational methods to bring home to the youthful intelligence the glory of life and the pricelessness of time!

As things are at present ordered, it is perfectly natural that, once released from school,

the boy should make all haste to put far behind him the recollection of his dry, mechanical, and irrelevant "lessons." This is especially inevitable in the case of the young boy, whose mental habits are hourly in process of formation. Later on, he may come to be more or less interested in some of his work; but by that time the habit of dismissing it from his mind at the earliest possible moment will have become inveterate. To the boy between seven and twelve, the great proportion of his work is not, and cannot be under present conditions, aught but sheer drudgery. If he does it with tolerable ease, he may take a certain incidental pleasure in that very fact; and emulation may spur his energies. But it is flatly impossible for him (unless he be one boy in a thousand) to find any intimate personal joy in his tasks— to feel that they make life clearer, or more interesting, or more beautiful to him. And if he were ever so willing to do so, his school acquisitions are not of the sort that he can possibly take with him out into the open. What have declensions and conjugations, rules and exceptions, problems and theorems, to do with life in the meadows or the woods, by down, or cliff, or riverside? In these days,

indeed, he may possibly have given some odds and ends of his schooltime to "science"; but has he been urged and aided to observe and interpret nature? Have the contours or the textures of the earth been made significant to him? Or the magical energies of the sun and the ocean, the frost and the rain? Has he learnt to admire the exquisite adaptations, the marvellous interrelations, the infinite fecundity, of the plant and insect life around him? Has his attention ever been directed to the beauty and the pathos of the animal world? Or has he been left to think of our dumb kinsfolk simply as things to be exploited for our uses and killed for our "sport"?[1] Has the reality and continuity of history ever been brought home to him by local and familiar illus-

[1] In *Hugh Rendal*, the hero's bosom friend Lowden, represented as a boy of almost ideal character, cannot pass a cow in a field without "potting" her with his catapult. Hugh suggests that she is "rather poor game"; but "'Rot! "I shan't hurt her,' replied Lowden, who, brought up "mainly in London, had no such delicate sense of what "was sport and what was not. *To him an animal was a* "*lawful target, no matter what its genus.* So out came his "catapult. Ph-wing went the elastic; and the next moment "the sedate lady was careering round the field with a "commotion as wild as her previous demeanour had been "calm."

tration? Has he been encouraged to realise that he is already, and must one day be in a yet fuller sense, a responsible member of a great and ancient community, which he may glorify by shaping his life to noble ends, and must degrade by trivial thoughts and unworthy actions? Has it ever been suggested to him that he should raise his eyes to the stars, and think for one moment of the awful Power that marshalled their glittering legions?

No; he is sent forth from dead tasks into a dead world. What wonder if child's-play, with its little emulations and vanities, becomes the one thing real to him? What wonder if this habit of thought, reinforced by the whole weight of corporate feeling in the school, among masters[1] and boys alike, should grow

[1] In *The Hill* we have a description of a very exciting Eton and Harrow match. There are twelve minutes to play and ten runs to be made: "Warde [the author's model "house-master] rises. 'I can't stand it,' he says, and his "voice shakes oddly. 'You fellows will find me behind "the Pavvy after the match.' 'I'd go with you,' says the "Rev. Septimus, in a choked tone, 'but if I tried to walk "I should tumble down.'" The faction fighters of the Byzantine circus were doubtless more violent, but can scarcely have been more hysterical, than these two products of public-school athleticism. Compare extract from *The Upton Letters*, p. 163, in Appendix N.

with his growth and strengthen with his strength, until he joins the ranks of the great child-public which lives on "sporting tapes," and pants, as the hart panteth after the water brooks, for "football editions" and "five o'clock scores"?[1] What wonder, I may add, if he should tend to pry, in unwholesome secrecy, into the one phase of the operations of nature which, both from within and from without, is forced upon his notice?

It may be said that, if not in the class-room, at any rate at morning chapel, and in church on Sundays, the boy's attention is directed to

> The spacious firmament on high,
> And all the blue ethereal sky,
> And spangled heavens . . .

But in how many cases has the religious teaching of a public school any intellectual stimulus

[1] In the debate on the Army Stores scandal in the House of Commons, on June 26, 1905, Dr. Macnamara said: "Whether this vote of censure be carried or not, nothing "will be done; the public will be excited for six weeks, and "then Test matches, billiard tournaments, and Bridge pro-"blems will intervene. But one of these days the British "muddlers will hit up against a scientifically organised race "like the Japanese, and then John Bull will crumple up, "cursing the happy-go-lucky folly and indifference which in "the end was his undoing."

in it? Too often it consists in the inculcation of unrealised theological formulas, served up with "a cauld clash o' morality." That its moral effect may often be good, I am far from denying. A master who is himself a sincere and enthusiastic "muscular Christian" may impress boys with an influential sense of the "manliness of Christ." They vaguely conceive that, had He been born in these latter days, though too "gentle," perhaps, to be of much use in the football field, He would certainly have been Captain of Cricket and a good all-round athlete. Their imagination fired by this hypothesis, they are willing to emulate Him in other matters; and the aspiration, no doubt, helps to make them gentlemen and good fellows. But this naïve anthropomorphism, though it may be a safeguard against meanness, and conscious cruelty, and vice, is not in the least inhibitive to triviality of thought and childishness of action. It was not the public-school Christ who said "Raise the stone, and there ye shall find Me; cleave the wood, and there am I." That logion might be the cardinal text of a religion of the intellect.

At all events, the religious teaching of the

average school is as powerless as the intellectual training to beget in the average boy the feeling that athletics are not the be-all and the end-all of the manly life, but are good only as a means to that health of body and mind without which the intellectual "enjoyment" of the Universe is, not impossible indeed, but very sorely hampered. I do not overlook the direct moral benefits derived from games—the patience, endurance, temper, loyalty, sense of fair-play, and even of generosity to opponents, that tend, no doubt, to be engendered by school athletics. But it is in the playing-fields themselves that these virtues are fostered—not in working out averages, memorising "records," and poring over the football and cricket columns of the halfpenny papers. All actual play, I repeat (with reasonable emulation between school and school), has my hearty sympathy. It is the inversion of reason, whereby games become the main business of life, to which all intellectual interests are openly subordinated, that I regard as noxious to the individual and perilous to the body politic.

Absorption in athletics, moreover, inevitably shades off into absorption in "sport," with its

fatal concomitant—gambling.[1] That gangrene of English life is indubitably propagated concurrently with the athletic craze. Not long ago, it was my fortune to inhabit, during vacation-time, one of the most ancient and famous of our public schools. I was struck by the fact that, in the places where one is apt to find walls and partitions defiled with

[1] From *The Hill* one gathers that at Harrow betting on house matches is quite openly carried on. See the account of the football match in Chapter IV.: "The odds amongst "the sporting fellows went from six to four against the "Manor." And presently: "The betting languished at "evens." Considerable sums (twenty to thirty pounds) are won and lost at Bridge; but this is surreptitious. In *Hugh Rendal*, the hero, under the influence of the Marquis of Chellersleigh, takes to betting on horse-races. His friend Lowden remonstrates with him and they quarrel. "The "interview was at an end. Both knew that the friendship "was too, at any rate for some time. Hugh, being mainly "in the wrong and very angry, had little difficulty in con-"vincing himself that he did not care. Lowden did care, "but felt, as firmly, that he had done right. *Wherefore* "*the reader will probably want to throw something at him.* "But it must be remembered that the question at what "point of rectitude a human being becomes a prig is neces-"sarily one of environment as well as personal taste." The author's assumption that the reader will want to throw something at a boy who feels he has done right in trying to stop a comrade and friend from betting, is surely very significant.

obscenities, there was nothing of the kind to be seen, but in their stead numbers of racing "tips"—"So-and-so for the St. Leger," the name of three horses "placed" in their order, and so forth. The observation seemed to me profoundly and ominously significant. I am not sure that I would not as willingly have encountered graffiti of the other sort.

The man, or boy, who can give his whole soul to sport (in the most extended acceptation of the term) has very little soul to give. His sense of the majesty of the universe, of the fascination of the world, and of his duty to his country, must be hopelessly atrophied. How far it may be true that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields at Eton [1] we need not here inquire; but unless we take thought betimes, I know of another battle that will assuredly be lost on these same playing-fields —the Armageddon of the future. I cannot end this section better than with a memorable saying of Mr. H. G. Wells: "It isn't as though the world was an untidy nursery: it is a place of splendours indescribable for all who will lift its veils."

[1] Appendix O, p. 253.

Postscript: On Bullying.—An important point to be considered, in estimating the value of school games, is the question whether they make, on the whole, for humanity or for inhumanity in those who play them. It is possible that, in affording a steady outlet for physical energy, and even for a considerable measure of physical violence, they may serve as a safety-valve for the instinct of brutality which is apt to manifest itself in the healthy young savage. It is possible, and I think it is partly true. We can scarcely doubt that such a game as football effects a valuable "katharsis" of many atavistic promptings. Bullying was probably much more prevalent in the pre-athletic days; and though a good part of the improvement must be attributed to the general amelioration of manners, some of it may fairly be placed to the credit of athletics. At the same time there is ample evidence to show that the "katharsis" is sadly imperfect, and that at many public schools gross and cowardly cruelty is very inadequately held in check.[1]

In *Hugh Rendal*, by Mr. Lionel Portman,

[1] The author of *The Upton Letters*, however, goes so far as to say that "in the matter of bullying and cruelty, which "used to be so rife at schools, public opinion among boys

(a story which, as I have said, has been recognised as life-like by good authorities, young and old), I come upon the following passage :—

"Under a strong and vigilant headmaster "there should be little real bullying in public "schools of to-day. Mind and body are, as "a rule, too well occupied by compulsory games "to need this outlet, and such brutalities as "'roasting' are at least rare, if they are by "no means unknown. But whatever optimists "may say, boy-nature does not change. As "long as man remains a virile animal—'a "brute,' murmur some of the ladies—so long "will the desire of cruelty arise sometimes with "his manhood and demand to be satisfied. If "the school be good at the moment this "satisfaction will not be allowed to go far. If "it be bad—and all schools have their ups and "downs—it will have some nasty results, which "will fall, as a rule, most heavily, not on the "ruffians who would be all the better for rough "treatment, but on the weakest, who deserve "it least, are least able to defend themselves, "and least likely to benefit thereby."

"does seem to have undergone a change. The vice has "practically disappeared, and the good feeling of a school "would be generally against any case of gross bullying."

We shall consider anon whether cruelty be, in fact, a necessary element in virility. In the meantime, let us see how two of the "virile animals" of Mr. Portman's story give evidence of their manhood:—

"Monday afternoon school happened to be "one of those for which Mr. Allardyce was "almost always late. Maice and Trollope made "a point of coming particularly early. As "Hugh approached the class-room, the former "advanced towards Barrie and said:

"'Come here, Master Barrie. You've been "top of the form two weeks running, and any-"body who does that has to have a drink. "You'd better take it quietly.'

"'No, I don't think I will,' said that youth ". . . 'but I dare say Rendal would like one.'

"Maice was, as Barrie had calculated, much "too angry to care who his victim was so long "as he had one, and instantly pounced upon "Hugh. The latter fought hard, for he saw "what was coming, but was soon overpowered "and held fast. There was a row of basins "close at hand, designed, though very rarely "used, for the washing of youthful hands. "One of these was filled with cold water. In "a second Hugh found himself raised aloft, his

"feet in the air, his chest resting on the brink
"of the basin, his arms held on either side.
"Maice stood beside him with a hand on his
"head. There was a moment's pause as he
"made one last struggle to get free. Then
"down went his face deep into the water and
"was held there four—five—six seconds; they
"seemed a hundred. Up again for a second
"or two, to give him breath, and down again
"before he had got it. A long, long dip; then
"up once more and a desperate gasp, which
"Maice and his fellows imitated with riotous
"delight. Down once more, and again up—
"and down. Hugh did not easily forget the
"length and suffocation of that fourth dip, the
"craving for air, the sense of drowning, the
"wild but useless struggle to get free.

"'That'll do,' said Trollope compassionately.
"'He's had enough.'

"'Not he,' replied Maice, and still held him
"there, though he allowed him a moment's
"breathing space. 'He shall have a little
"breath, he shall.'

"Hugh gasped for breath and got a little
"momentary relief. But his head was still
"held close to the water, and he knew that it
"might be plunged down at any moment,

"and the whole process begun all over
"again.

"'Oh, do let me go!' he could not help
"murmuring. 'I can't stand it; I really
can't."

"'We'll go on till you can, then,' said Maice.
"'Little boys mustn't lose their tempers. Down
"you go.'

"And down went his head once more, and
"the inhuman process was repeated till at last
"he thought he would never get his breath
"again. Then suddenly the lock of the class-
"room door rattled. Mr. Allardyce appeared
"—ten minutes late. With splendid irony he
"gave the signal 'Time!' and retired, seeing
"nothing."

"Hugh had a dismal term," we are told.
"He did not have to endure 'a drink' more
than two or three times after this first occasion,
or ever again with such severity. For there
happened, fortunately, (!) to be a boy named
Taplin"—whom, in brief, the virile youths
found it more amusing to torture. "Never-
theless there were plenty of kicks to spare for
small boys who would work their hardest." At
a later point, Hugh, when a prefect, has to
punish a boy for gross and systematic bullying.

In Mr. H. A. Vachell's book *The Hill*, dealing with Harrow, bullying is less prominent. We hear of only one bad case: the life of a delicate and sensitive boy being made intolerable because a bigger boy chooses every now and then to "turn him up" in a folding-bed, so that he is squeezed, head downwards, between the mattress and the wall, and well-nigh suffocated. Not only is this a most painful experience, but the uncertainty as to when his enemy may next choose to inflict it naturally deprives the boy of sleep, and injures his health. I could cite other instances of bullying, from real life; but the evidence of Mr. Portman and Mr. Vachell—both, be it observed, enthusiastic supporters of the public-school system—will probably be accepted as sufficient to prove that games form a very imperfect safety-valve for this phase of "virility." I have reason to believe, too, that the offence committed by Hugh Rendal—that of taking a higher place in form than his tormentors—is a common motive for bullying. How characteristic it is that the English boy, while careless of scholastic distinction for himself, should resent intellectual competence and conscientiousness in others!

The publication of *Hugh Rendal* called forth a correspondence in the *Daily News* in which some people denied, while others energetically affirmed, the prevalence of bullying. The most noteworthy deliverance ran as follows :—

"Bullying may, of course, be overdone, "though it seldom is; but within proper "bounds bullying, in my opinion, forms an "essential and valuable feature of the public-"school system, and it would indeed be a bad "day for this country if boys were to be "brought up in the atmosphere of the matron's "room."

Let us think for a moment of this opinion. To whom does the writer hold that bullying is "valuable"? To the bully? or to the bullied? The latter position is defensible, if we regard every good as an absolute good, and ignore its concomitant evils. No doubt it is good that a boy should know how to endure pain, though it is doubtful whether the power to do so is really enhanced, like an aptitude or a dexterity, by constant practice. It may even be good, up to a certain point, that a boy should learn to put up with injustice, and not expect all the world to sympathise with his

wrongs.[1] But I am scarcely to be persuaded that a long-continued system of torment, lowering a boy's vitality, making the rhythm of his life one of alternate apprehension and agony, and begetting in him the feeling of utter hopelessness in any struggle against injustice, can be ultimately wholesome either for the body or for the mind. Who knows what chronic nervous derangements, what mental lesions, what moral disasters, may not have had their obscure starting-point

[1] Herbert Spencer has the following admirable note on "the plea put in by some for the rough treatment experi-"enced by boys at our public schools; where, as it is said, "they are introduced to a miniature world whose hardships "prepare them for those of the real world. It must be "admitted that the plea has some force; but it is a very "insufficient plea. For whereas domestic and school disci-"pline, though they should not be much better than the "discipline of adult life, should be somewhat better; the "discipline which boys meet with at Eton, Winchester, "Harrow, &c., is worse than that of adult life—more unjust "and cruel. Instead of being an aid to human progress, "which all culture should be, the culture of our public "schools, by accustoming boys to a despotic form of "government and an intercourse regulated by brute force, "tends to fit them for a lower state of society than that "which exists. And chiefly recruited as our legislature is "from among those who are brought up at such schools, "this barbarising influence becomes a hindrance to national "progress."

in a course of bullying at school? If a boy really gains by being tortured, let him be subjected, like the youthful Shawnee or Sioux, to an official and regulated ordeal, as part of the recognised course of moral hygiene. The idea sounds preposterous, and I think it is. Shall we conclude, then, that it is more rational to leave the administration of salutary torture, and the determination of its amount, to the whim of other boys, who inflict it with insulting savagery, and with every aggravating circumstance of indignity and injustice?

But let us admit, for the argument's sake, that bullying normally results in a balance of good to the victim. What, now, of the bully? What does he gain? What is the "value" of the practice to him? He gains absolutely nothing but an indelible brand on his soul. Once to have inflicted bodily torment on a weak and defenceless creature, not in anger, not in hot blood, but in sheer lust of cruelty, is once to have gone down to hell. To have made the infliction of such torment a daily recreation, is to have descended below the fiends, who presumably act under superior orders and not for their personal solace. It is appalling to think that there are hundreds or

thousands of well-dressed, smug, respectable Englishmen going about the world to-day with this hideous blot on their souls, and that scarce one of them is bowed down with remorse. "What little brutes we were in those days!" they say with a shrug. If they ever feel a prick of conscience, they salve it with the philosophic reflection that "As long as man remains a virile animal the desire of cruelty will sometimes arise with his manhood." Mr. Portman, who, to do him justice, does not extenuate the unloveliness of his bully's character, dismisses him with a hopeful word. In the epilogue to *Hugh Rendal*, the hero's bosom friend Lowden is made to remark: "The Head says a fellow like Maice, who "plays the brute at school, often turns out a "ripping good chap afterwards. If he gets "into the Army I daresay he'd make a first-"rate officer." With all respect to the Head and to Lowden, I venture to doubt it. Unless Maice undergoes a catastrophic change of heart, he will never be a "ripping good chap." The presence and the tolerance of Maices in the Army is a source of weakness, not of strength. There is reason to think that they are rather less prevalent in the British Army

than in some others; and, in so far as that fact may be attributed to the influence of athletics, it is the strongest point in their favour.

That an instinct of cruelty does rear its foul head in many boys—perhaps in most—is undeniable; but it is neither a symptom of "virility" in any true sense of the word, nor is it an ineradicable prompting which must, for health's sake, be gratified. There are probably few children who have not, at a very early age, manifested some disposition to torture animals; but in the immense majority it can be easily and thoroughly checked. The admitted fact that most boys at a public school, though capable of many thoughtless moral cruelties,[1] are incapable of inflicting cold-blooded physical tortures on their weaker fellows, proves that the habitual bully is not a normal but an abnormal phenomenon, and ought to be dealt with as such. I will not go into the exceedingly difficult questions of

[1] I would not be thought to palliate or make light of moral cruelties; but those which the schoolboy inflicts generally arise from mere incomprehension, from lack of sympathetic sensitiveness, not from active malignity. Many people, too, will agree with the philosopher who said, "If I could hand on my physical pains to some one else, I could make shift to bear my moral pains myself."

schoolboy honour and of school police. A sensible youth, of full and recent experience, whom I have consulted on the point, strongly maintains that a competent body of prefects ought to be able to keep bullying thoroughly in check, and scouts a vague suggestion of mine that certain official *delatores*, serving in rotation, for short periods, might have the duty solemnly imposed on them of reporting to the Headmaster any case of bullying that came within their ken. Very likely the suggestion is quite impracticable; in which case one can only wonder whether it is possible for a Headmaster to keep himself constantly assured of the competence and vigilance of his prefects. Of one thing I am certain—namely, that when once a boy is clearly convicted of long-continued and systematic bullying, he should be regarded as morally infectious, and segregated without delay. This crime should be as imperative a ground for expulsion as others which it is the fashion to call darker and more heinous. Far be it from me to say that they are less so; but when the point of utter hideousness is reached, who shall establish a scale of infamy?

In touching on curative measures, however,

I am travelling beyond my province. What I desired to point out was simply that, among the moral advantages claimed for the existing system, the extirpation of wanton cruelty cannot rightly be reckoned. The "humanities" of old left the schoolboy proverbially inhumane. Now that we have the humanities plus athletics, a considerable improvement is doubtless to be noted, for which athletics may probably claim part of the credit. But I repeat that it must also be due in no small measure to the general humanisation of life outside the circle of the school.

XII

ETHICS

BY its ethical influence a system of education must stand or fall. But the test is not, "Does it lay on our evil impulses the shackles of an external authority, of a hard-and-fast code of conduct?" The true test is, "Does it tend to bring our impulses into harmony with the progressive order of the world? Does it place us in the current of moral evolution? Or leave us in a back-water? Or set us fighting against the stream?"

Knowledge, certainly, is not always virtue, but vice is almost always ignorance. I mean, of course, vice in the (apparently) free and sane agent. Hereditary disease of the will, and the social outlawry which forcibly constrains to vice and crime, do not here concern

us. Morbid hereditary predispositions no doubt occur among public-school boys; but a system must be based on normal, not on exceptional, requirements. Moreover, there is no reason to doubt that a generally wholesome mental training will, as a rule, be as favourable to morbid as to healthy individuals.

I repeat, then, that the constant source, or rather condition, of moral misadventure is, in the last analysis, ignorance. The more immediate condition is often idleness, tedium; but that is only ignorance in disguise. To re-word more accurately a maxim of the excellent Dr. Watts, we may say that "Nature finds some mischief still for idle brains to do." But then Nature has also been kind enough to provide that no brain need be idle. She has surrounded us with an illimitable multitude of marvels to amuse the eye and occupy the mind. It is only our physical or mental impercipience that leaves the sluggish and flaccid mind an easy prey to the promptings of vulgarity, or sensuality, or baseness.

I am not denying, of course, that the foundations of all moral training—truthfulness, gentleness, generosity, courtesy—ought to be firmly established in a child's mind before

he is capable of anything that can reasonably be called a religion of the intellect. My point is that, as he grows older, nothing can more effectually check the insidious inroads of evil than an education which makes the universe stupendous to him, the world alive, and history real.

Again, I am the last to deny that there are unsolved moral problems in life. It is often very difficult for the adult man to decide whether, in his own conduct or in his judgment of others, he is, as I have phrased it, in the current of moral evolution. But the most serious of these problems do not arise for boyhood, and ought not to arise even for adolescence. When at last they have to be faced, the man who "knows the world," in the deep and noble sense, will certainly be nearer the right solution than he to whom knowledge means only dilettantism—a resource to fall back upon when, by chance, he is tired of sport.

If we think for a moment, it is surely beyond question that nothing can be more moralising than a sense of the majesty and mystery of the adventure in which we are engaged—in which we are partakers with all

the saints, and martyrs, and heroes of thought and deed, who light up the record of the ages. Baseness and vice and cruelty are foolishly and ludicrously out of proportion. We have no time for such things. They betoken crass ignorance of the value of life, and the relative values of its elements. Life is too little to be bought with baseness, too great to be wasted in sensuality. What is there in the world worth lying, or robbing, or ferociously striving for? If one could cheat death by cheating one's neighbour, there might be some sense in it. If one could steal genius or knowledge—could filch away "this man's art and that man's scope"—in that, too, there would be some show of reason. But nothing worth having is capable of being stolen, either by force or fraud. What can be stolen, or otherwise basely acquired, is the means of enjoying the pleasures of ostentation, sensuality, or sport—the very things which a religion of the intellect would most decisively discount.

Ostentation—the craving for the paltry envy of paltry people—can have no charm for any one who realises the infinitesimal pettiness of the material aspect of life. "What is it

all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million million of suns?" Sensuality—the enslavement of the soul to one or all of the baser appetites—not only eats up time and slackens energy, but spreads an unclean veil between us and the glories of the world. Sport—even apart from the cruelty and the gambling incident to certain forms of it—can offer no overwhelming temptation to one who has come to realise that the only "play" which never palls on us is the play of the intelligence.[1] The radical error of our present educational system is that in theory it tacitly denies this fact, and in practice effectually obscures it.

If, as I have admitted, a religion of the intellect was scantly possible to (say) our great-grandfathers — was possible, in fact, only to

[1] This play upon the word "play" is perhaps unworthy, and has been sharply criticised. Need I explain that in talking of "play of the intelligence" I do not mean novel-reading, acrostic-solving or Bridge, but use the word in the sense in which one talks of the "play" of an engine or the "play" of natural forces? It is objected that to make my proposition accurate, even from my own point of view, I must say that the play of the intelligence is the only play which *ought never to* pall. But I believe the statement to be true as it stands. The man who makes a business of play finds it pall like any other business in which there is no

elect souls among them—it follows that the corresponding morality was practically inaccessible to men of the eighteenth and earlier centuries. My contention is that the widening and intensifying of the world's self-consciousness, which has taken place during the past hundred years, has brought with it a new era in moral as well as in intellectual education. The universe has come alive, as it were, in a multitude of ways. The great generalisations towards which, a hundred years ago, only a few thinkers were painfully groping, are now within the reach of every intelligence, to be studied, tested, corrected perhaps, and at any rate to give a new interest and significance to all the phenomena of life. Other generalisations, other and yet more luminous unifications

advance, no fresh conquest, no novelty of experience; but if play is his only resource, he often will not admit, even to himself, how tedious it has become to him. If the incessant exercise of mere physical skill satisfied all the needs of the human soul, the juggler or acrobat would be the happiest man alive. Nor do the victims of play-ennui always dissemble their dissatisfaction. I could cite several products of public-school athleticism, who, with every outward advantage in their favour, and with ample opportunity for sport at their command, confess, in the flower of their age, that life has lost all relish for them.

of apparently disparate facts, are doubtless waiting on the threshold; and though the actual discoverers must be few, every seeing and thinking man may contribute to the verification and rectification of hypothesis in one or more branches of inquiry. One of the simplest experiments of the physical laboratory may serve to illustrate my conception of the effect of the past century upon the world's self-consciousness. You take a handful of iron-filings, scatter them at random over a large sheet of paper, place the paper on an electro-magnet, and then pass the electric current through the coil—at once the filings, as though endowed with life, shake off their inert disorder, and glide into beautiful curves and complex patterns. The facts of nature and of history are the iron-filings of my apologue. At the close of the eighteenth century they had been reduced to order at a few individual points; but to the average man, even of fair intelligence, they seemed to be scattered higgledy-piggledy over the field of his observation. The thought of the nineteenth century has played the part of the electric current; so that now the most ordinary intelligence can clearly see the old facts, and myriads of new ones, fall into beau-

tiful curves of correlation, which were scarcely divined, or not at all, by the greatest thinkers of a hundred years ago. The result of this new order in our consciousness of the universe —with its promise of a still more marvellous order awaiting our divination—is that the life of the soul can now enter into a new rivalry with the life of the senses, while the claims of the race assume a new preponderance over the egoistic cravings of the individual. That, as it seems to me, is the sum and substance of the ethical implications of a religion of the intellect.

The facts of history, no less than those of nature, have fallen into curves of vastly enlarged significance under the influence of the electric current flowing through the coil of the great generalisations. Both world-citizenship and state-citizenship have put on new meanings, and ought to inspire new hopes and fears and enthusiasms. The facile optimisms of the end of the eighteenth and middle of the nineteenth century have vanished into thin air. Before the troubled eyes of the nations there loom such dangers and horrors as our fathers dreamed not of ; yet beneath the storm-cloud, on the far horizon, there

glimmers a new hope, less fallacious, perhaps, than those which deceived the men of 1790 and of 1850. If the problem of a sane and humane world-order is found to be vastly more complex than our fathers supposed, we can also tell ourselves that its elements are better understood. We know that it must be worked out on scientific, not on idealistic, lines; that it is, in the last resort, a problem of psychology. To some of us it seems that the coming century is destined to witness a race, as it were, between constructive intelligence, obstructive stupidity, and destructive frenzy, to decide whether development shall proceed continuously and on the whole humanely, or shall suffer a catastrophic setback to anarchy, followed, perhaps, by a military world-empire. Here, if you like, is a "sporting interest" capable of appealing to rational and responsible human beings!

What is absolutely certain, at any rate, is that English citizenship at the present moment is pregnant with more imminently momentous issues than at any the most critical juncture in the history of the past. As I said before, the plot of the world-drama is rapidly thickening; and if England is to play a part in it

worthy of her name and fame, it behoves the rising generation to gird up its loins and quit itself, not childishly, but manfully. The battles of the future, whether material or spiritual, will not be won in the playing-fields, but in the working- and thinking-rooms: not by elegant dilettantes or "thorough sportsmen," but by men who have studied the sequences of nature and read the lessons of history. If our sons cannot be brought to realise this before it is too late, then assuredly they must be prepared to have the problems of the future worked out for them by others, and to take an unfree part in the coming time.

But if their opportunities and obligations can be brought home to them, here again, surely, is a moralising force of the utmost potency. While science should make them feel the disproportionateness of wrong-doing in this majestic frame of things, history should as clearly lead them to regard intemperance or uncleanness of act, baseness or triviality of thought, as a disloyalty to England, to their fathers—and to their sons.

Though last, not least, among the vices here enumerated I reckon triviality. It is at present a veritable canker of the schoolboy mind; nor

does the ability to turn a more or less Ovidian couplet or Ciceronian period do anything to check its ravages. The contamination of the music-hall has filtered down destructively through the scrap paper and the sporting rag, till nothing is exempt from the spirit of shallow persiflage and caricature. The other day, in a railway carriage, I saw three public-school boys laying their heads together in chuckling glee over a *Comic History of England* far more vulgar and foolish than that of which John Leech—dear mid-Victorian philistine!—in a luckless moment made himself guilty. "My young friends," I thought to myself, "if you must have some silly parody to snigger over, for heaven's sake let it be the *Comic Latin Grammar!*"

Among Robert Louis Stevenson's poems there is a noble address to his father, the last of a gallant family of lighthouse engineers. I quote its beginning and its end:—

> Peace and her huge invasion to these shores
> Puts daily home; innumerable sails
> Dawn on the far horizon and draw near;
> Innumerable loves, uncounted hopes,
> To our wild coasts, not darkling now, approach:
> Not now obscure, since thou and thine are there,

And bright on the lone isle, the foundered reef,
The long, resounding foreland, Pharos stands.

These are thy works, O father, these thy crown;

*   *   *   *

This hast thou done; and I—can I be base?
I must arise, O father, and to port
Some lost complaining seaman pilot home.

Were I a schoolmaster—invested with a cure of boyish souls—I would, when the fitting time came, take every boy under my charge to Westminster Abbey: not, in the first instance, to the Poets' Corner, that treasure-house of sacred memories, but to the spot where, within ten yards of each other, Newton and Darwin rest. There I would bid him remember how England, through these her sons, has reared two of the great guiding-lights of the human intellect; and I would urge him to say to his motherland, as Stevenson to his father:

This hast thou done; and I—can I be base?

That is a line which should sound like a trumpet-call in the ear of every generous lad, as history—which includes, of course, not only literature, but the history of science—recalls to him the achievements of his fathers.

The last word of each of the three parts of the *Divina Commedia* is "stelle" (stars). To the stars Dante always returned; and they must indeed be the last word of any utterance, be it in glorious verse or humble prose, that is concerned with the mystery of man's relation to the infinite. This it is that, to the thinking mind, lends life at once its zest and its dignity. This it is that reduces to an infinitesimal pettiness all our cupidities, our vanities, our egoisms. What are we to say, then, of the education which leaves the boy, on the threshold of manhood, untouched by the incredible romance of his position in time and eternity, and conscious of life only as a commonplace affair, to be got through somehow by the aid of "pleasures," sensual and æsthetic, helped out by factitious excitement over various forms of child's-play? I believe, and have tried to show, that the education which arrives at this impotent issue is quite unnecessarily and indefensibly stupid. I believe that, "if youth but knew," life would take on a wholly different and far nobler and happier complexion, even for the average boy. Let him learn, from wherever his lot is cast in this inexpressibly beautiful and precious land of

England, to watch the thronging snow-storm of worlds, magically arrested in the abyss of space, and to realise that he is bound to them, and they to him, by chains of which the snapping of a single one would mean the ruin of the universe. Let him habituate his mind to this overwhelming conception, and it will need no external imperative, no contract of reward or punishment, to bring home to him the ineptitude of mean thought or ignoble action

> Before the stony face of Time,
> And looked at by the silent stars.

APPENDIX OF ILLUSTRATIVE EXTRACTS[1]

A. The Infinitely Little.

From a report of Professor Darwin's Presidential Address at the meeting of the British Association at Cape Town, August 15, 1905.

Professor Darwin concluded the first part of his address with some remarks on the size of atoms and their combination with molecules. His remarks on the size of atoms may be best quoted verbatim. "To obtain any adequate conception of their size we must betake ourselves to a scheme of threefold

[1] The extracts from Herbert Spencer are made by permission of Messrs. Williams & Norgate; from Sir Joshua Fitch, by permission of the Cambridge University Press; from *The Upton Letters*, by permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.; from *Hugh Rendal*, by permission of Mr. Alston Rivers.

magnification. Lord Kelvin has shown that if a drop of water were magnified to the size of the earth, the molecules of water would be of a size intermediate between that of a cricket-ball and of a marble. Now each molecule contains three atoms, two being of hydrogen and one of oxygen. The molecule system probably presents some sort of analogy with that of a triple star; the three atoms, replacing the stars, revolving about one another in some sort of dance which cannot be exactly described. I doubt whether it is possible to say how large a part of the space occupied by the whole molecule is occupied by the atoms; but perhaps the atoms bear to the molecule some such relationship as the molecule to the drop of water referred to. Finally, the corpuscles may stand to the atom in a similar scale of magnitude. Accordingly a threefold magnification would be needed to bring these ultimate parts of the atom within the range of our ordinary scales of measurement."

[How such conceptions as that of Lord Kelvin can be physically verified is to me a profound mystery; but metaphysically they are inevitable.]

B. Nature Study.

From Herbert Spencer: *Education*, p. 53.
(Williams & Norgate, ed. 1905.)

The current opinion that science and poetry are opposed, is a delusion. . . . It is not true that the facts of science are unpoetical; or that the cultivation of science is necessarily unfriendly to the exercise of imagination and the love of the beautiful. On the contrary, science opens up realms of poetry where to the unscientific all is a blank. Those engaged in scientific researches constantly show us that they realise not less vividly, but more vividly, than others, the poetry of their subjects. Whoso will dip into Hugh Miller's works on geology, or read Mr. Lewes's *Seaside Studies*, will perceive that science excites poetry rather than extinguishes it. And he who contemplates the life of Goethe, must see that the poet and the man of science can co-exist in equal activity. Is it not, indeed, an absurd and almost a sacrilegious belief, that the more a man studies Nature the less he reveres it? Think you that a drop of water, which to the vulgar eye is but a drop of water, loses anything in the eye of the physicist who knows that its

elements are held together by a force which, if suddenly liberated, would produce a flash of lightning? Think you that what is carelessly looked upon by the uninitiated as a mere snow-flake, does not suggest higher associations to one who has seen through a microscope the wondrously-varied and elegant forms of snow-crystals? Think you that the rounded rock marked with parallel scratches, calls up as much poetry in an ignorant mind as in the mind of a geologist who knows that over this rock a glacier slid a million years ago? The truth is, that those who have never entered upon scientific pursuits are blind to most of the poetry by which they are surrounded. Who-ever has not in youth collected plants and insects, knows not half the halo of interest which lanes and hedgerows can assume. Who-ever has not sought for fossils, has little idea of the poetical associations that surround the places where imbedded treasures were found. Whoever at the seaside has not had a micro-scope and aquarium, has yet to learn what the highest pleasures of the seaside are. Sad, indeed, is it to see how men occupy themselves with trivialities, and are indifferent to the grandest phenomena—care not to understand

the architecture of the heavens, but are deeply interested in some contemptible controversy about the intrigues of Mary Queen of Scots!—are learnedly critical over a Greek ode, and pass by without a glance that grand epic written by the finger of God upon the strata of the Earth!

[I would not be understood to share the philosopher's contempt for the intrigues of Mary Queen of Scots. The element of character and drama in history seems to me as real as the sociological element, and not so very much less important.]

From Sir Joshua Fitch: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 129.

The boundless and multiform experience which lies open to the view of the patient and enthusiastic naturalist is well illustrated in Sir John Lubbock's books on Ants and Bees. The child who is led to feel an interest in the lower animals, otherwise than for sport or play, and is shown how to observe their habits and to learn how their structure is adapted to the life they live, and to the part they have to play in Nature's economy—who makes and arranges his own collection of caterpillars, of leaves, of

ferns, or of shells—is unconsciously a minister and to some extent an interpreter of Nature, and is undergoing some of the training in the inductive philosophy which will certainly do much to strengthen his intellectual life. And even if it does not lead to the making of new discoveries, the habit of making collections is one which has a great influence in developing the observant faculty, and in bringing the learner into loving communion with Nature. Mr. Ruskin, for example, has said, "The leaves of the herbage at our feet take all kinds of strange shapes as if to invite us to examine them. Star-shaped, heart-shaped, spear-shaped, arrow-shaped, fretted, fringed, cleft, furrowed, serrated, sinuated, in whorls, in tufts, in spires, in wreaths, endlessly expressive, deceptive, fantastic, never the same from foot-stalk to blossom, they seem perpetually to tempt our watchfulness and take delight in outstripping our wonder." A boy who hunts through the woods and makes a collection of leaves, arranging them according to their shapes, assigning the names to the trees and shrubs that bear them, who observes how in their arrangement, the length of their stalks and the exposure of their surfaces, they secure to the plant the

maximum of light and air, is unconsciously receiving a discipline in the elements—if not of reasoning—at least in the processes by which the material for reasoning and for scientific conclusions may be accumulated and used. But it happens that knowledge of this kind does not "pay." No examination tests it, no form of honour or degree is to be gained by it, no money value attaches to it.

C. Astronomy.

From Sir Joshua Fitch: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 131.

After all even the crude and shallow teaching of the use of the globes had its value. It enlarged the horizon of the pupils' thoughts. It gave them a new interest in the mystery of the heavens, a new sense of the grandeur of the universe and an awed consciousness of "the silence that is in the starry sky." It led them to lift up their eyes with the feeling of the old prophet, and to say, "Who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number, that calleth them all by their names, not one faileth?" It carried the students out of themselves and the smaller and prosaic interests of

their own lives, and led them to care about what was vast and eternal and infinitely remote. Both from the moral and the intellectual point of view, this experience is healthful and inspiring. It is worth while to know how to find the polar star, and how to distinguish planets from fixed stars, to look through the telescope and see the moons of Jupiter, and to distinguish the several constellations in the heavens. And the knowledge of these things will go far to cultivate the observant faculty, and to indicate to learners the methods by which the laws of nature have been studied. Astronomy is one of the most disinterested of sciences, because, if pursued at all, it is not because money is to be made out of it, but simply because of the delight, and the sense of expansion which the study gives.

[My critic "G. M." writes: "I believe that if 'Kappa' saw how the Astronomy was 'mugged up' for any ordinary examination on the Modern Side he would find that the actual education in it was no more stimulating to the imagination than Greek grammar." This is obviously a criticism of existing methods of teaching, not of astronomy as a subject of study.]

D. The National Portrait Gallery.

From Sir Joshua Fitch: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 28.

A noble addition has recently been made to the educational resources of London in the form of the National Portrait Gallery, in which are arranged in chronological order the portraits of all the most famous sovereigns, statesmen, divines, writers, and military and naval commanders of the last four centuries. As a means of fixing and strengthening the impressions derived from history, this gallery, though its possibilities of usefulness are at present insufficiently appreciated, has already proved of great value to many London teachers. A class, for example, which has lately been engaged in the study of the Stuart period, is taken to the three Seventeenth Century rooms, and invited to look at the pictures of all the famous men and women of the time, to notice their dress, the insignia of their various offices, and so to recall the parts they have respectively played in the drama of our national history. Thus the personal interest in the actors is awakened or revived, further inquiry is stimulated, and impressions conveyed in class read-

ing, or in oral lessons become more vivid and permanent.

There is a remarkable chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the writer unfolds to his countrymen what is in fact a National Portrait Gallery, as he enumerates, one by one, the heroes and saints of the Jewish history, and adds to his catalogue these inspiring words:

"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of those . . . who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

And finally he draws this conclusion from his long retrospect:

"Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

How much of the philosophy of history is condensed into that single sentence! It is

suggestive to us of the ethical purpose which should dominate all our historical teaching. To what end do we live in a country whose annals are enriched by the story of great talents, high endeavours and noble sacrifices, if we do not become more conscious of the possibilities of our own life, and more anxious to live worthily of the inheritance which has come down to us?

[Sir Joshua Fitch might have cited in this connection the noble picture-scene in *Hernani* (Act iii. sc. 6). Hernani, it will be remembered, has taken refuge in the castle of his foeman Don Ruy Gomez de Silva. Charles V. is in pursuit of the bandit, and demands that Ruy Gomez shall give him up. The old hidalgo leads the king from portrait to portrait of his ancestors, beginning with "Don Silvius, qui fut trois fois consul de Rome," and recounting their heroic deeds. After enumerating a long succession of heroes, he continues :—

> Voilà don Vasquez, dit le Sage,
> Don Jayme, dit le Fort. Un jour, sur son passage,
> Il arrêta Zamet et cent Maures tout seul—
> J'en passe, et des meilleurs.—Voici men noble aïeul.
> Il vécut soixante ans, gardant la foi jurée,
> Même aux juifs . . .

Ce portrait, c'est le mien.—Roi don Carlos, merci !—
Car vous voulez qu'on dise, en le voyant ici,
"Ce dernier, digne fils d'une race si haute,
Fut un traître et vendit la tête de son hôte !"

Bating a little of the "panache," we may well contemplate our collection of Family Portraits in the spirit of Don Ruy Gomez.]

E. Pleasurable Work *v.* Drudgery.

From Herbert Spencer : *Education*, p. 77.

But of all the changes taking place, the most significant is the growing desire to make the acquirement of knowledge pleasurable rather than painful—a desire based on the more or less distinct perception, that at each age the intellectual action which a child likes is a healthy one for it ; and conversely. There is a spreading opinion that the rise of an appetite for any kind of information, implies that the unfolding mind has become fit to assimilate it, and needs it for purposes of growth ; and that, on the other hand, the disgust felt towards such information is a sign either that it is prematurely presented, or that it is presented in an indigestible form. Hence the efforts to make early education amusing,

and all education interesting. Hence the lectures on the value of play. Hence the defence of nursery rhymes and fairy tales. Daily we more and more conform our plans to juvenile opinion. Does the child like this or that kind of teaching?—does he take to it? we constantly ask. "His natural desire of variety should be indulged," said M. Marcel; "and the gratification of his curiosity should be combined with his improvement. . . ."

(P. 93.) Who indeed can watch the ceaseless observation, and inquiry, and inference going on in a child's mind, or listen to its acute remarks on matters within the range of its faculties, without perceiving that these powers it manifests, if brought to bear systematically upon studies *within the same range*, would readily master them without help? This need for perpetual telling results from our stupidity, not from the child's. We drag it away from the facts in which it is interested, and which it is actively assimilating of itself. We put before it facts far too complex for it to understand; and therefore distasteful to it. Finding that it will not voluntarily acquire these facts, we thrust them into its mind by force of threats and punishment. By thus denying the know-

ledge it craves, and cramming it with knowledge it cannot digest, we produce a morbid state of its faculties; and a consequent disgust for knowledge in general. And when, as a result partly of the stolid indolence we have brought on, and partly of still-continued unfitness in its studies, the child can understand nothing without explanation, and becomes a mere passive recipient of our instruction, we infer that education must necessarily be carried on thus. Having by our method induced helplessness, we make the helplessness a reason for our method. . . .

As a final test by which to judge any plan of culture, should come the question,—Does it create a pleasurable excitement in the pupils? When in doubt whether a particular mode or arrangement is or is not more in harmony with the foregoing principles than some other, we may safely abide by this criterion.

From Sir Joshua Fitch: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 225.

A school, Ascham thought, should be, as its name implies, *Ludus litterarum*,—the house of play and pleasure, not of fear and bondage. "Love is better than fear, gentleness better

than beating, to bring up a child rightly in learning." . . .

(P. 238.) Except in Ascham's writings and in those of Mulcaster, who was (1561) the first headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School, one finds little or no recognition of the importance of a good *method* of teaching. Certainly, there is no evidence that anybody thought it necessary to facilitate the early efforts of a schoolboy, or to make learning interesting or pleasant to him. Ascham indeed was a signal exception to this general rule. So much of the old spirit of monastic austerity—a spirit, which measured the value of all discipline by its hardness and painfulness—survived in the schools, that one of the merits often claimed for classical teaching was the difficulty it presented to the learners. Many of the pedagogues of those centuries, down to Ichabod Crane, the switch of whose rod Washington Irving heard through the woods of Sleepy Hollow, as the "schoolmaster urged tardy loiterers over the flowery paths of learning," seem never to have been quite sure that they were doing justice to their scholars unless the lessons were made repulsive and distasteful. The belief that the *real* difficulties of life are grave enough without bur-

dening it with artificial difficulties, that time and labour might easily be economised by securing the willing co-operation of the student, and by adopting methods which should be pleasant as well as rational, has to some extent, but alas! not yet to the full extent, been at last recognised by modern teachers. But until this belief became prevalent, one could hardly expect that the traditional gerund-grinding and memory work would be greatly improved.

From *Some Suggestions for the School Curriculum of Girls and Boys under Fourteen*, p. 8. (The Parents' National Educational Union, 26, Victoria Street, London.)

We recognise that children come into the world with a few inherent desires, some with more, some less. These are, roughly, the desire for power, for praise, for wealth, for distinction, for society, and for *knowledge*. It seems to us that education which appeals to the desire for wealth (marks, prizes, scholarships, or what not), or to the desire of excelling (as in the taking of places, &c.), or to any other of the natural desires, *except that of knowledge*, destroys the balance of character; and, what is even more fatal, destroys by

inanition that desire for, and delight in, knowledge, which is meant for our joy and enrichment through life. The undebauched mind takes knowledge with avidity; and we find lessons are so interesting to children that they need no other stimulus.

To adapt Matthew Arnold's phrase concerning religion, education should aim at giving knowledge "*touched with emotion.*" Frederika Bremer has a charming episode in her novel, *Neighbours*, where two school-girls fight a duel on behalf of their several heroes, Charles XII. and Peter the Great. The children of to-day fight no such duels. They do not care for heroes, they care for marks. Knowledge for them is not "touched with emotion," unless it be the emotions of personal acquisitiveness and emulation. Boys and girls have it in them to be generous and enthusiastic. If they leave school without interests, beyond that of preparing for further examinations, or the absorbing interests of games, if they are intellectually devitalised, ought we to blame them, or the methods by which they have been taught?

[Without entirely accepting the writer's view as to the discouragement of emulation, I think

this passage so admirable that I have quoted it at length, though only the first paragraph bears directly on the particular point at issue. On the other hand, I am equally impressed by the wisdom of the note of warning sounded by Miss Clementina Black in the following extract. There is, of course, nothing irreconcilable in the two positions. The theory that a child is capable of exercising its mind pleasurably cannot justly be held responsible for the practice which denies it the opportunity of exercising its mind at all.]

From Miss Clementina Black : *Mental Underwork of Children.* (*Westminster Gazette*, June 10, 1905.)

. . . The average modern child from five years old onwards is mentally slack. It does not wish to use its brain, and, like most persons who fail to exercise that organ, it is apt to be bored. The tiny child, on the other hand—the baby of two or three—is not mentally slack ; it is apt, indeed, to be a most promising person, healthy, intelligent, and good-tempered —far better company than were its parents, uncles, and aunts at the same age. How comes it that these well-endowed babies grow

into such inert-minded children, and often, alas! in spite of feverish endeavours during the years of adolescence, into such ill-educated adults?

The question may perhaps be answered by Sir John Gorst's pronouncement: "Nothing degenerates from lack of use faster than the capacity to work." The brain of the modern child seems to be originally good, but the popular plan of teaching leaves that brain without real intellectual exercise for so many years that the capacity for mental work largely degenerates for want of use.

The Kindergarten system—admirable for the nursery—may become, when applied to children who are no longer babies, a mere instrument for retarding mental development. This aspect of the matter was brought home so repeatedly to one experienced teacher as to make her at last declare that the Kindergarten made "clever children stupid and stupid children stupider." Many persons must have seen instances that tend to confirm her view of children who, after some years at a Kindergarten, seem entirely without the power of attention. The plan of making all instruction easy and pleasant seems to act on the mind

much as the plan of mincing up all food might be expected to act upon the stomach—tougher meat is rejected. By force of never being called on to make a mental effort, the child becomes incapable of doing so. He has learned to fold papers, to make baskets, to produce pretty patterns of flowers in "brush-work"; he may even have gathered a good deal of miscellaneous information about natural objects; but he has not learned the one really essential thing—he has not learned to learn; and his teachers for the next seven, eight, or nine years will be chiefly occupied, under the disguise of various studies, in teaching him that. Also, he has not learned to read easily, and has therefore been excluded from the one means whereby he might have taught himself to learn, unconsciously imbibing at the same time the spelling of his native language and a copious vocabulary—things neither taught nor acquired in most English schools. And although all these valuable things have been sacrificed in order that he might be amused and interested, he has, after all, *not* been amused and interested. The occupations of the orthodox Kindergarten delight the babies, but leave the elder children listless.

Their growing brains want something harder to wrestle with; their capacity for work—real work—demands exercise, and presently degenerates for want of it. The true way to make learning easy is not to bring the learning to the level of the child but to bring the child to the level of the learning—partly because, while the knowledge to be acquired cannot really, whatever we choose to say, be minimised, the child's power of acquisition can really be developed. But it is only by exercise that it can be developed. How lamentable, therefore, that this should so often be systematically avoided, and that, instead of the habit of application—by which alone real knowledge can be gained—a habit of non-application should actually be fostered!

That the brains of young children should be overtaxed is no doubt one of the worst of educational evils; but it is one of which there is singularly little danger in English middle-class education. That their brains should be insufficiently exercised is also an evil, and an exceedingly prevalent one. It diminishes the happiness of the children, retards their mental growth, causes a vast waste of time and energy in their school years, adds greatly to the labour

of their teachers, and leaves to elder school-children the alternative of overwork or of remaining permanently more or less uneducated.

We are not, as a nation, so well taught or so intellectual that we can afford to let the capacity for work of our young citizens degenerate for lack of use. Yet that is precisely what some "educational reformers" are not only doing but priding themselves on doing. They believe that the human brain, unlike every other human organ, gains strength by disuse, and that the way to train a child's mind is to save it from working. The results may be observed in the growing illiteracy of what are called the "educated classes" in England.

F. A Religion of the Intellect.

From Herbert Spencer: *Education*, p. 60.

Lastly we have to assert, and the assertion will, we doubt not, cause extreme surprise—that the discipline of science is superior to that of our ordinary education, because of the *religious* culture that it gives. Of course we do not here use the words scientific and religious in their ordinary limited acceptations; but in their widest and highest acceptations.

Doubtless, to the superstitions that pass under the name of religion, science is antagonistic; but not to the essential religion which these superstitions merely hide. Doubtless, too, in much of the science that is current, there is a pervading spirit of irreligion; but not in that true science which has passed beyond the superficial into the profound.

"True science and true religion," says Professor Huxley at the close of a recent course of lectures, "are twin-sisters, and the separation of either from the other is sure to prove the death of both. Science prospers exactly in proportion as it is religious; and religion flourishes in exact proportion to the scientific depth and firmness of its basis. The great deeds of philosophers have been less the fruit of their intellect than of the direction of that intellect by an eminently religious tone of mind. Truth has yielded herself rather to their patience, their love, their single-heartedness and their self-denial, than to their logical acumen."

So far from science being irreligious, as many think, it is the neglect of science that

is irreligious—it is the refusal to study the surrounding creation that is irreligious. Take a humble simile. Suppose a writer were daily saluted with praises couched in superlative language. Suppose the wisdom, the grandeur, the beauty of his works, were the constant topics of the eulogies addressed to him. Suppose those who unceasingly uttered these eulogies on his works were content with looking at the outsides of them; and had never opened them, much less tried to understand them. What value should we put upon their praises? What should we think of their sincerity? Yet, comparing small things to great, such is the conduct of mankind in general, in reference to the Universe and its Cause. Nay, it is worse. Not only do they pass by without study, these things which they daily proclaim to be so wonderful; but very frequently they condemn as mere triflers those who give time to the observation of Nature—they actually scorn those who show any active interest in these marvels. We repeat, then, that not science, but the neglect of science, is irreligious. Devotion to science is a tacit worship—a tacit recognition of worth in the things studied; and by implication in their

Cause. It is not a mere lip-homage, but a homage expressed in actions—not a mere professed respect, but a respect proved by the sacrifice of time, thought, and labour. . . .

And lastly the further religious aspect of science, that it alone can give us true conceptions of ourselves and our relation to the mysteries of existence. At the same time that it shows us all which can be known, it shows us the limits beyond which we can know nothing. Not by dogmatic assertion, does it teach the impossibility of comprehending the Ultimate Cause of things; but it leads us clearly to recognise this impossibility by bringing us in every direction to boundaries we cannot cross. It realises to us in a way which nothing else can, the littleness of human intelligence in the face of that which transcends human intelligence. While towards the traditions and authorities of men its attitude may be proud, before the impenetrable veil which hides the Absolute its attitude is humble—a true pride and a true humility. Only the sincere man of science (and by this title we do not mean the mere calculator of distances, or analyser of compounds, or labeller of species; but him who through lower truths

seeks higher, and eventually the highest)—only the genuine man of science, we say, can truly know how utterly beyond, not only human knowledge but human conception, is the Universal Power of which Nature, and Life, and Thought are manifestations.

G. Language and Mental Training.

From Herbert Spencer : *Education*, p. 58.

While, for the training of mere memory, science is as good as, if not better than, language, it has an immense superiority in the kind of memory it trains. In the acquirement of a language, the connections of ideas to be established in the mind correspond to facts that are in great measure accidental ; whereas, in the acquirement of science, the connections of ideas to be established in the mind correspond to facts that are mostly necessary. It is true that the relations of words to their meanings are in one sense natural ; that the genesis of these relations may be traced back a certain distance, though rarely to the beginning ; and that the laws of this genesis form a branch of mental science—the science of philology. But since it will not be contended that in the ac-

quisition of languages, as ordinarily carried on, these natural relations between words and their meanings are habitually traced, and their laws explained; it must be admitted that they are commonly learned as fortuitous relations. On the other hand, the relations which science presents are causal relations; and, when properly taught, are understood as such. While language familiarises with non-rational relations, science familiarises with rational relations. While the one exercises memory only, the other exercises both memory and understanding.

H. The Time Limit.

From Herbert Spencer: *Education*, p. 7.

The question which we contend is of such transcendent moment, is, not whether such or such knowledge is of worth, but what is its *relative* worth? When they have named certain advantages which a given course of study has secured them, persons are apt to assume that they have justified themselves: quite forgetting that the adequateness of the advantages is the point to be judged. There is, perhaps, not a subject to which men devote

attention that has not *some* value. A year diligently spent in getting up heraldry, would very possibly give a little further insight into ancient manners and morals. Any one who should learn the distances between all the towns in England, might, in the course of his life, find one or two of the thousand facts he had acquired of some slight service when arranging a journey. Gathering together all the small gossip of a county, profitless occupation as it would be, might yet occasionally help to establish some useful fact—say, a good example of hereditary transmission. But in these cases, every one would admit that there was no proportion between the required labour and the probable benefit. No one would tolerate the proposal to devote some years of a boy's time to getting such information, at the cost of much more valuable information which he might else have got. And if here the test of relative value is appealed to and held conclusive, then should it be appealed to and held conclusive throughout. Had we time to master all subjects we need not be particular. To quote the old song:—

> Could a man be secure
> That his days would endure

> As of old, for a thousand long years,
> What things might he know!
> What deeds might he do!
> And all without hurry or care.

"But we that have but span-long lives" must ever bear in mind our limited time for acquisition. And remembering how narrowly this time is limited, not only by the shortness of life, but also still more by the business of life, we ought to be especially solicitous to employ what time we have to the greatest advantage. Before devoting years to some subject which fashion or fancy suggests, it is surely wise to weigh with great care the worth of the results, as compared with the worth of various alternative results which the same years might bring if otherwise applied.

I. The Classics and English Style.

From Sir Joshua Fitch: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 292.

In German and in French colleges and schools of the highest rank, discipline in the structure, history and right use of the vernacular speech receives far more attention than in our own. The common assumption that the classically trained boy has learned English indirectly

and incidentally, through the medium of his Latin and Greek studies, and need not attend much to English *per se*, is not found to be verified by experience. It is not unfrequently observed that when youths educated in public schools offer themselves as candidates for admission to the public service, their performances are marred by *gaucherie*, by bad spelling and writing, by false and confused metaphors, by colloquialisms and slang, and by that most offensive of all slang, the use of pretentious words and phrases, the exact meaning of which is only imperfectly understood. To whom ought we to look except to those who have had the advantage of a liberal education, to be the chief guardians of the purity of our native language, and exemplars of accuracy without pedantry, and ease without slovenliness? Yet at present, there is much to be desired, in this respect, even in schools and colleges of the highest standing.

From H. Sidgwick : *Essays on a Liberal Education*, ed. by F. W. Farrar (1861), p. 116.

It is only at a certain stage in a youth's progress that Latin and Greek begin to give training in literature. In many cases the boy

(and even the undergraduate) never becomes able to extract and feed on the beauties of his authors. A mind exhausted with linguistic struggles is not in a state to receive delicate literary impressions; instead of being penetrated with the subtle and simple graces of form, it is filled to the brim with thoughts of gender, quantity, tertiary predicates, and the uses of the subjunctive mood.

From *The Upton Letters*, p. 28.

This is the one thing that I try with all my might to impress on boys; that the essence of all style is to say what you mean as forcibly as possible; the bane of classical teaching is that the essence of successful composition is held to be to "get in" words and phrases; it is not a bad training, so long as it is realised to be only a training, in obtaining a rich and flexible vocabulary, so that the writer has a choice of words and the right word comes at call. But this is not made clear in education, and the result on many minds is that they suppose that the essence of good writing is to search diligently for sparkling words and sonorous phrases, and then to patch them into a duller fabric.

K. Ascham and Colet.

From Sir Joshua Fitch: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 228.

Ascham's place in the history of education is that of one who regarded with sympathy the older classical discipline, as well as the new revival of interest in Greek, but who looked with fresh eyes upon the traditional methods of teaching, and suggested some rational and practical improvements. He was a "humanist" of the same type as Milton, who thought it the first business of teaching to make a man an accomplished and thoughtful gentleman, high-minded, courageous, and industrious in the pursuit of truth, and who considered that the study of language, logic, rhetoric, and the related sciences, were the best instruments for the attainment of this end.

It was to the influence of such men as Ascham and his friends—scholars and statesmen, who were deeply penetrated with the reforming spirit in religion, and who cared for the promotion of learning for its own sake, and not as a means of promoting the interests of the Church, — that we owe the regene-

rate educational foundations of the sixteenth century.

Of these, Dean Colet's great school of St. Paul's (1510) was almost the first which distinctly aimed at a high secular education, and deliberately disavowed any special ecclesiastical purpose. Though the founder was Dean of St. Paul's, he gave in his statutes no share of the government to his successors in the Chapter, but confided the whole future administration to a trading guild, to the Company of Mercers, who have since honourably fulfilled for nearly four centuries the duty he assigned to them. His scholars—who were for ever to number exactly 153, in commemoration of the number of fishes in the net of the apostles — were to be drawn from all nations and countries, and to be instructed freely in the ancient tongues. Scholastic Latin was strictly excluded by the statutes, but Christian writers were admissible, if in good Latin. The High Master was to be "learned in good and clean Latin literature, and also in Greek, *if such may be gotten*." This conditional regulation significantly reminds us that at that date the Greek revival had made but little effective way.

By the end of the century, founders such as Laurence Sherriff at Rugby, and John Lyon of Harrow, felt freer to insist on Greek as a necessary element of their course, Hesiod, however, being the only Greek poet named in the Harrow statutes.

L. The Claims of the Vernacular Languages.

From Sir Joshua Fitch: *Educational Aims and Methods*, p. 242.

It is mainly owing to the existence of the mediæval grammar schools, to the explicit directions in their statutes and deeds of gift, and to their intimate connection with the Universities, that the type of education which they represented has survived so long, and has so dominated the popular conception of what scholarship and learning mean. A man who has been duly instructed in Latin and Greek is regarded as a scholar *par excellence*, however ignorant he may be of other things; and another man skilled in science, accomplished in modern languages, literature, and philosophy, but knowing no Greek, has no claim to be considered a scholar at all.

Yet since the establishment of grammar schools, French, German, and English have acquired a literary character. Each has opened out to the student a noble literature, and has been made the subject of philological investigation. Our own language especially has been traced to its source. What we still call (in spite of the late Professor Freeman) Anglo-Saxon, with its fuller inflections and synthetic structure, has revealed to the English student the true meaning of those fragments of accidence and syntax which survive in our current speech. And in the presence of our existing resources, it is difficult to deny that the student of *one* ancient language and one modern—say Latin and German, or Greek and French, or either Latin *or* Greek and Anglo-Saxon—is in a better position, as far as philology is concerned, than if he confined all his linguistic studies to Latin and Greek. He will know at least as much of the philosophy of grammar, and of the principles which underlie the structure of all language, and he will certainly not have been less successfully disciplined in accuracy of expression and of thought.

It is impossible for us to overlook the claims of other subjects, and, as a matter of fact, one

modern language at least, mathematics, and some acquaintance with the literature and history of the later centuries, form part of every scheme of liberal education, even when the claims of physical science are neglected altogether. But the effect of undertaking to do all this, and at the same time to maintain the superstition that Latin *and* Greek must form the staple of every gentleman's education, is that some of these things must be learned imperfectly. And it often results that Greek and Latin are the subjects so learned. How many of the scholars of the grammar schools, or even of the Universities, could talk, write easily, or think in Latin? What proportion of those who learn Greek, read Sophocles or Homer with ease and pleasure, and catch the full flavour and spirit of the language? A very large percentage of the scholars who go out from the Universities have carried their studies far enough to acquire a knowledge of the grammar, and to read, by means of helps and commentaries, certain well-known and well-annotated authors; but they have stopped short at the point at which the learning of a language becomes a real instrument of literary culture, and produces an educational result at

all commensurate with the time and effort expended in acquiring it.

M. Congestion of Studies.

From Mr. A. C. Benson: *An Eton Education*, (*National Review*, vol. xlv. p. 447).

. . . The system is in fact in a state of acute congestion, and the only cure is an immediate simplification.

No real progress is made in any subject until a certain degree of mastery is obtained. Under the present conditions it is impossible for the average boy to master any subject. The stimulus of enjoyment is therefore sacrificed; and a boy's whole time is spent on elements. He never reaches the stage at which classics become literature; he never touches the point at which the play of one subject into another becomes visible to him.

What wonder that when he goes into the world, prepared for no particular profession, entirely adrift in modern languages, knowing nothing of politics, or history, or geography, he is somewhat bewildered at what all this fuss has been about, and why his life was burdened with Greek accents and Latin prosody. Very

probably he consoles himself, if he is a philosopher, by thinking that it is all right somehow, and that he can play a game or two; he can read the sporting columns in the papers with interest; he had a very good time at Eton, and he makes up his mind that his boys shall, if possible, have a good time there too.

N. Muscle *v.* Intellect.

From *The Upton Letters*, p. 42.

One of my perennial preoccupations here is how to encourage originality and independence among my boys. The great danger of public-school education nowadays, as you say, is the development of a type. It is not at all a bad type in many ways; the best specimens of the public-school type are young men who are generous, genial, unembarrassed, courageous, sensible, and active; but our system all tends to level character, and I do not feel sure whether it levels it up or levels it down. In old days the masters concerned themselves with the work of the boys only, and did not trouble their heads about how the boys amused themselves out of school. Vigorous boys organised games for themselves, and indolent

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boys loafed. Then it came home to school authorities that there was a good deal of danger in the method; that lack of employment was an undesirable thing. Thereupon work was increased, and, at the same time, the masters laid hands upon athletics and organised them. Side by side with this came a great increase of wealth and leisure in England, and there sprang up that astonishing and disproportionate interest in athletic matters, which is nowadays a real problem for all sensible men. But the result of it all has been that there has grown up a stereotyped code among the boys as to what is the right thing to do. They are far less wilful and undisciplined than they used to be; they submit to work, as a necessary evil, far more cheerfully than they used to do; and they base their ideas of social success entirely on athletics. And no wonder! They find plenty of masters who are just as serious about games as they are themselves; who spend all their spare time in looking on at games, and discuss the athletic prospects of particular boys in a tone of perfectly unaffected seriousness. The only two regions which masters have not organised are the intellectual and moral

regions. The first has been tacitly and inevitably extruded. A good deal more work is required from the boys, and unless a boy's ability happens to be of a definite academical order—in which case he is well looked after—there is no loophole through which intellectual interest can creep in. A boy's time is so much occupied by definite work and definite games that there is neither leisure nor, indeed, vigour left to follow his own pursuits. Life is lived so much more in public that it becomes increasingly difficult for *sets* to exist; small associations of boys with literary tastes used to do a good deal in the direction of fostering the germs of intellectual life; the net result is, that there is now far less interest abroad in intellectual things, and such interests as do exist, exist in a solitary way, and generally mean an intellectual home in the background.

(P. 163.) I feel my position most acutely at this time of year, when the serious business of the place is cricket. In cricket the boys are desperately and profoundly interested, not so much in the game, as in the social rewards of playing it well. And my worthy colleagues give themselves to athletics with an earnestness which depresses me into real dejection. One

meets a few of these beloved men at dinner; a few half-hearted remarks are made about politics and books; a good deal of vigorous gossip is talked; but if a question as to the best time for net-practice, or the erection of a board for the purpose of teaching slip-catches, is mentioned, a profound seriousness falls on the group. A man gets up in his chair and speaks with real conviction and heat, with grave features. "The afternoon," he says, "is not a good time for nets; the boys are not at their best, and the pros. are less vigorous after their dinner. Whatever arrangements are made as to the times for school, the evening must be given up to nets." The result is a pedantry, a priggishness, a solemnity about games which is simply deplorable. The whole thing seems to me to be distorted and out of all proportion.

From *Hugh Rendal*, p. 175.

But the Marquis was not to be moved. Sport of every kind he loved, but games he could not endure. So day by day they drew further apart. The budding athlete's disdain of the non-athlete took possession of Hugh, and soon he began to share some of the con-

tempt for "Smith" which was already widely felt. To judge one's fellows mainly by their muscles and power of using them in a certain way may seem ludicrous enough to older eyes. But the idea, if primitive, is undeniably sound. Apart from their other and more obvious advantages, games have this above all—that they create a corporate life, and absorb common interests which would not otherwise exist. And so the boy who will not play his part in that corporate life is generally tabooed; while of him who thinks of little else the world may reasonably expect the soundest citizenship when he grows up.

(P. 114.) Hugh, only able to share as a spectator in all this success, won a prize of another kind, any number of which he would have given for one gained on the running-track: namely, the Upper Fifth form prize.

(P. 218.) The members of that dormitory, on the other hand, had no sooner heard the name of their new chief than they began to look forward with warm interest to the excitement of "ruxing" him. Opposition is always pleasant to a strong party attacking a weak one, from Westminster downwards. But at no time is it such a luxury—nay, almost a

necessity—as at school, where there are weak masters and prefects to be ragged, and light punishments to be risked. Perhaps the acme of enjoyment is reached when a small prefect is the person to be opposed; a scholar, that is, who has won his place early by brain power, instead of by the force of gravity, but has neither muscle nor athletic success to back him up. Then mind without matter is called upon to govern matter without mind; and as there is nothing which the latter hates more than the former, so there is nothing which the former will find more difficult to control than the latter. Ask your average schoolboy whom he despises most, and nine times out of ten he will point to a scholar. To have more brains than, to be different from, himself is alone a serious misdemeanour. To have a smaller body, or possibly an original mind, is sin unpardonable.

From Mr. A. H. Gilkes: *English Ideas on Education* (*Independent Review*, October, 1905).

The excellent opportunities which are given to boys at most schools—it should not be said for learning a subject, but rather for having their faculties properly drawn out by the proper teaching of a subject—are in many cases spoiled

by the foolish feeling that many boys and many parents have with regard to games, particularly, that is, the two games of cricket and football. Excellent as these games are—and they are excellent, and no school could without terrible loss do without them, or do without an earnest interest in them taken by the boys in the school —yet it is true that the interest taken in them now is too great. It is not that too long a time is spent upon them—boys should have plenty of fresh air and of exercise, and of occupation for their thoughts. It is that the interest in these games is often too absorbing, lasting in a full measure throughout the whole day, and distorting the ideals of life: often making boys admire skill in them more than they admire usefulness and virtue. There seems to be little doubt about this; and there are plenty of signs that everybody is beginning to think so. And when parents are of one mind on this point, then newspapers will cease to confer ruinous publicity upon boys' proceedings: and in boys' minds games will take their proper position, and once again only do them good.

O. The Playing-Fields and the Army.

Dr. T. Miller Maguire, in an able and fiery lecture on *Military Education in England* (1902), speaks as follows :—

"We are told, you are turning the English race into bookworms. I have never met an English officer who was a bookworm. I should like to meet one. I do not think I ever knew three men who injured themselves by over-study in my life. We are told that we are going to turn the young and ardent Englishmen into bookworms, and we are told that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton. . . . The famous remark that the battle of Waterloo 'was won on the playing fields of Eton' WAS NEVER UTTERED BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON ON ANY OCCASION, and yet it is used by pedants who have ruined the education of our better classes as a text for justifying their neglect of mental instruction of any kind whatever. We are personally in favour of every manly accomplishment, as Milton was, as Bacon was, as Locke was, as Xenophon was, in their books on education. But I hold that the mental faculties are worthy of as much attention by officers as the muscles,

and that no skill in cricket or football is a compensation for complete ignorance in every branch of learning, mathematical, linguistic, historical, political, geographical, and technical.

"It is a poor excuse if you do not know anything about Tactics to say that you can play cricket at the age of from eighteen to twenty-five; a well-trained imagination and judgment as well as thew and sinew make the perfect man. Utter ignorance embodied in a gentleman causes him to be in his later years a burden to himself, a scandal to his family, and a danger to the State. It is the aim of all education to form a gentleman in all godly discipline, mental as well as physical. Supposing, however, that the great Duke had been so ill-advised as to use the phrase with which he is wrongfully credited, that Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton, I contend that he would have apologised at once if the matter had been brought to his attention."

[Dr. Maguire then goes on to show that many of the most distinguished officers in the Peninsular and Waterloo campaigns were not public-school men, and that almost all were

already carrying the colours of a regiment at an age at which the modern youth thinks himself lucky if he has gained his school or house "colours."]

"What happened to Wellington himself? When his mother discovered that he was not distinguishing himself either in the playing-fields or in the class-rooms at Eton, at the age of fifteen she removed him to a school at Brussels, and he went for nearly two years to a crammer (Pignerol), where he learned French, German, and physical exercises. Then he went into the Army at eighteen. And yet he is alleged to have said that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton! . . .

"I suppose it will soon be alleged that Lord Roberts, who was at Eton for eight months when he was fourteen years old, and then went to a crammer's (Brackenbury's) for eighteen months, won the Kandahar Campaign at Eton. Lord Wolseley went to private schools in Dublin, and played at surveying and carpentry, much to his benefit in the Crimea."

[It is very difficult, according to Dr. Maguire,

to discover a single soldier of distinction who has been devoted to games or notably successful in them. On the other hand, most of the great soldiers have also been great readers. Napoleon carried quite a considerable library with him on all his campaigns. Wellington was an assiduous student of military literature. Marlborough (but this Dr. Maguire omits to mention) was an exception to the rule.]

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